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EASTERN
ORTHODOX CHURCH

ZANKOV



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WRITTEN by a Bulgarian author and originally published in German, this book derives its importance from two considerations: It is the first attempt by an Orthodox Churchman in modern times to present a concise statement of the essentials of Orthodoxy, and it is one of the very few studies of the Eastern Church by one of its own leaders which has ever appeared in language current in even a part of Western Europe or America.

THE
EASTERN ORTHODOX CHURCH

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The
Eastern Orthodox Church
" *Das orthodoxe Christentums des Ostens.*

STEFAN ZANKOV

T Sankov, Stefan

Translated and Edited by
DONALD A. LOWRIE

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FOREWORD

TO THE AMERICAN EDITION

IN recent years there has been a demand, widely recognized and expressed, for a concise, clear, authentic, and up-to-date presentation of the Orthodox Church. Christians throughout the world, and particularly in the West, are under deep obligation to Dr. Stefan Zankov, the distinguished rector of the Theological Academy of Sofia, Bulgaria, for meeting this need. It is fortunate that through the present translation by Dr. Donald A. Lowrie this work is made available for English-speaking readers.

The timeliness of this contribution of Professor Zankov is most evident. Contacts between the Orthodox East and the Christian communions in the West have greatly multiplied during the last two decades. This has been due partly to the growing streams of emigration and travel. Much more has it been occasioned by the mingling of men in the World War, and by relations established in the wide and beneficent ministries of Western philanthropy throughout the vast areas of eastern and southeastern Europe in the pathway of the war. A more significant influence has been that exerted by the great Russian diaspora and the stimulating activities of many of the

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thinkers and scholars of this remarkable movement. The practical and fraternal work of such organizations as the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations and the World's Student Christian Federation has served to establish understanding and heart union between many of the leaders of tomorrow in the Eastern and Western Churches. Through such truly oecumenical gatherings as the Stockholm Conference on Christian Life and Work and the Lausanne Conference on Faith and Order, as well as those of the Movement to Promote International Friendship Through the Church, the Christians of East and West have been more closely drawn together.

This mingling of the members of the Eastern and Western communions has revealed how ignorant, after all, we have been and still are with reference to each other's history, teaching, life, and work. It is not surprising, therefore, that there should have been so much suspicion and mistrust, and that there has been so little sharing with one another in the deepest things of life. The growing interest in religion, and the greater attention recently given to the subject of worship, in particular to its liturgical and mystical aspects, has served to deepen the desire to enter into a larger understanding of Orthodoxy.

One need only mention some of the essential values of Orthodox Christianity to suggest with what great profit they may be studied by those of us who belong to Christian communions of the

West. What do we not all owe to the basic writings of the great Fathers and to the conserving power of the early Oecumenical Councils? Think of the massive Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, the most authoritative and important document of Orthodoxy and the one accepted as the unifying platform on which rest the most hopeful oecumenical movements of today. Then there is the wonderfully rich and meaningful liturgy of Orthodoxy, into the depths of which no one can enter without great enrichment. The profoundly moving sacred music will ever be a source of spiritual help to all who come under its spell. The mystical and contemplative note in Orthodoxy also has a very special message to those of us in the Churches of the West. With them, as the author of this work has pointed out, the essential purpose of the service is not merely education and moral influence but rather to unite the worshipper with the supernatural world, with God. "Through it the splendor of eternity breaks into the reality of today and bears the faithful with it aloft into the sphere of the invisible and eternal."

We form some conception of the great spiritual riches of the Orthodox communion when attention is called to the traits which those who know them best consider most distinctive, most honored, and best exemplified not only by her saints of other days but also by multitudes of her humble communicants today—devotion, humility, love, reverence or God-consciousness, and a marvelous

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capacity for vicariousness. What Churches in modern centuries have passed through such fires of persecution or furnished such hosts of confessors and martyrs for the Christian Faith as the Russian, the Armenian, and the Greek?

Surely such a Church has a great, even a priceless contribution to make to our common Christianity. In a day when those who bear the Christian name are confronted with the task of bringing the knowledge of Christ to two-thirds of the human race, and when the life of the Churches is imperilled by the rising tide of secularism and materialism, an added challenge comes to the readers of this volume to do all in their power to bring about such relations between our different communions that we may truly share with one another our riches in Christ.

Professor Zankov by his luminous and impressive unfolding of Orthodoxy has done much to further the realization of this high end. He has done so with fidelity to truth and with a remarkable comprehension of Christians of other backgrounds and convictions. Above all his work is pervaded with a spirit which reveals a responsiveness and, I venture to add, will call forth a responsiveness to the exhortation contained in the worlds of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom: "Let us love one another that we with one accord may confess the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

JOHN R. MOTT.

NEW YORK,
September 1929.

PREFACE TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION

THE present book was produced in connection with six addresses I delivered as visiting lecturer in the University of Berlin, in the summer semester, 1927.

For the honour of having been invited to present these lectures, I am deeply grateful to the Theological Department of Berlin University. To my esteemed colleague, Adolf Deissman, for his interest in the presentation of the lectures and his assistance in their publication, I offer my warmest thanks.

STEFAN ZANKOV.

SOFIA,
February 1928.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

AFTER a thousand years of practical isolation, the Orthodox Church has suddenly come into contact with western Christianity. Not in a few scattered points, but along a continuous line, from Finland to Asia Minor, are these new contacts effective. Orthodoxy in the Baltic States, the Orthodox Church in Poland, the churches of all the Balkan countries now have intimate relationship and even co-operation with the rest of Christendom such as was undreamed of before the war, while the deep spiritual life of the Russian *émigrés* in a dozen other European countries has roused new interest in Orthodoxy and made a great contribution to the œcumenism which seems to be one sign of our times. Kattenbusch's remark, in his review of the present work, may be true, that the Orthodox Church is in the midst of a new up-burst of spiritual and intellectual life. This book itself is perhaps one instance of such a process. But it is in the new realization of old treasures jealously guarded since the early Christian centuries, treasures which some of the western churches have either lost or forgotten, that this move-

ment consists, and nothing in our generation could be more profitable than a reciprocal sharing of the experiences developed so long in separation. In this spirit of œcumenical interchange the German original of this book was prepared: its English translation is offered in the hope of extending such fruitful acquaintance to an even wider field.

In the brief time since it first appeared, this volume in German by a Bulgarian author has attracted wide attention. Specialists representing all the Christian confessions in a score of European countries have proclaimed it a work of unusual significance in the history of Orthodoxy. Its importance derives from two considerations: the book is the first attempt in modern times to present a concise statement of the essentials of Orthodoxy, and it is one of the very few studies of the Eastern Church by one of its own leaders which has ever appeared in a language current in even a part of the West. That the attempt is hailed as eminently successful by many orthodox authorities offers further reason for its wider distribution. The author, Professor of Ecclesiastical Law in the University of Sofia, needs no introduction to those who have been connected with any of the great œcumenical movements of to-day, "Stockholm," "Lausanne," or that for Friendship through the churches. Professor Zankov has represented his Church in all of these, as well as other international groups. He is Doctor

of Theology (Cernowitz) and of Law (Zurich), member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and author of two notable books on the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. As Editor-in-chief of the official organ of the Bulgarian Synod, he has long been widely known in orthodox countries.

In preparing the translation, I have attempted to preserve as far as possible the style of the original. The German edition is generously provided with footnotes, most of which, excepting marginal references, have been embodied in the English text. For the remaining notes, rich in detailed reference to source material, the student is referred to the original edition, *Das Orthodoxe Christentum des Ostens*, Furche Verlag, Berlin, 1928. The author dedicates his book to his wife. If a second dedication were possible, this translation should be dedicated to my wife, without whose sympathetic co-operation the present edition would never have appeared.

D. A. L.

PRAGUE, CZECHOSLOVAKIA,

May 1929.

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The Eastern Orthodox Church

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

“What is the Orthodox Church? Is it merely a name without real Orthodoxy and without the greatest and most indescribable powers? Or is not Christ, her Head, with her? The Holy Mother of God, the Apostles and all the Martyrs? Are not the œcumenical teachers and saints with her and for her?”—
FATHER JOHN OF KRONSTADT, *Homily on the Sunday of Orthodoxy*.

I

THE century-long division of Christendom, especially the separation between East and West, has led to sharp differentiation and almost complete estrangement between the two. There have been times in which one part knew nothing of the other, and cared less. And those times are not so far behind us. The dark days of surprisingly meagre or altogether incorrect knowledge of each other, or, more unfortunate still, a mutual feeling of mistrust and suspicion, extend up to the present itself.

As far as the Christians of the orthodox East are concerned, their souls have been

practically a closed book, not only to western Christians in general, but even to investigators. The Christians of the orthodox East have felt themselves forgotten or misunderstood by the Christianity of the West. They felt that the West regarded orthodox Christianity with coldness, unfriendliness, and mistrust: the Roman Catholics with especial hate and enmity and the Protestants with disparagement. And really, for many people in the West the orthodox East either does not exist at all, or it seems a stiff and petrified image, or else a dark realm of the deepest heathen superstition and unbearable tyranny. Roman Catholics have been especially sharp and unkind in their statements about Orthodoxy. For well-known hierarchs of the Roman Church, Bonomelli, Bishop of Cremona, for example, the Orthodox Church "has no right even to discuss its supposed inheritance from Christ." "Ignorance and simony," continues this Bishop, "are the two incurable faults of its clergy, both monastic and otherwise. Its influence on the cultural world is zero; it is as though it did not exist; it is like a shadow out of the past; it scarcely deserves the name Christian." Even Roman Catholics who are considered friends of Orthodoxy, frequently pass judgment on orthodox Christians in not very different terms. Thus Prince Max of Saxony: "Neither Catholics nor Protestants in the West respect their opinions. They are all so far behind, they

have no part to play nowadays. We do not even attack them . . . they are a life without a soul . . . they are outworn and dead." Even in very recent times similar things have been thought and written about orthodox Christianity in high academic circles of the Roman Catholic world. As late as 1911 Conrad Lübeck writes: "The Orthodox Church is impotent, exhausted, dumb, and stupid. . . . In both its inner religious life and its outward forms, it is undoubtedly in a state of stagnation and petrification, of crumbling and dissolution."

In the Protestant¹ world orthodox Christianity is regarded with far more objectivity, understanding, and feeling. But here, too, the knowledge of Orthodoxy is often very meagre, even to-day, and the attitude toward it very cold and critical. Nevertheless, there have always been many Protestants, especially scholars, to whom the East revealed its inner life and who had a warm Christian sympathy for Orthodoxy. This is increasingly true in modern times. It may be truly said that in recent years a movement has arisen in the Protestant world which shows great and sincere interest for the orthodox East, regards it with warm sympathy and deep respect, and confidently expects the East to make a great contribution toward the development of the Christianity of the future. These tendencies, as far as I can see and measure them, are becoming broader and deeper year

■ See note, p. 37.

by year, sometimes even so expansive that we Orthodox ourselves are surprised and embarrassed.

How is this great and growing interest of the modern western world, apparently so contradictory, to be explained? And has it any special meaning for the future of Christianity? We may suggest the following ideas and facts in explanation :—

The generally awakened interest in religion, and especially in the emotional and the mystical-symbolic phases of Christianity; the aversion from rationalism and intellectualism and a turn toward the irrational and supra-rational; the general interest for the East and its religions.

The movement toward a stronger ecclesiastism and with it an aversion from individualism, and a turning toward communal life in the Church. The movement for a liturgical Christianity and the lively interest in eschatological thought.

The great inter-church movements for œcumenism and for the practical and dogmatic unity of the Christian churches.

The bonds of mutual respect and appreciation which have been created by the meeting of Christians of East and West in great masses, during the world war. (A German writes that during his stay in Russia in war time he "lived so fully into the orthodox religious and liturgical life as to feel that he had come nearer

to Absolute Religion, that new concepts of devotion, reverence, humility and sacrifice had been created.")

The great diaspora of millions of Russian orthodox *émigrés* and their intellectual labour, from a consciously orthodox standpoint, among western Christians.

These few points give sufficient basis for assuming that the great interest of western Christianity for eastern is nothing accidental, and that in this new meeting of the two worlds something great and organic is taking place before our eyes. If the existence of orthodox Christianity, its preservation through all the centuries, is something divinely planned, certainly the present entrance of eastern Christianity into the circle of intensive interest of the West (and vice versa) is not less providential. The same may be said of their increasing mutual contacts.

From the foregoing it appears characteristic of the times in which we live that the great University of Berlin, so typical of western Christianity, has invited an orthodox professor to lecture on the Essence of Orthodox Christianity in its Evangelical Lutheran Department of Theology. I have the deep sense that in our times something great and holy is being prepared in the body of the one Church of Christ. How is it now with orthodox Christianity? What is its essence? Where and by what means is its spirit expressing itself?

Before I proceed to answer these difficult questions, it will be well to give a brief sketch of the external situation and an outline of the historical development of the Orthodox Church.

Orthodox Christianity of to-day, or more exactly, the present-day Orthodox Church, embraces almost completely the following peoples: the Greeks, the Russians, the Serbs, the Bulgarians, the Rumanians and the Georgians. Besides them, there are small bodies of Orthodox of various nationalities in Eastern and Central Europe and Western Asia. As an exception it should be noted that perhaps three million Ukrainians and Ruthenians, inhabitants of present-day Poland and Eastern Czechoslovakia, as well as 1,400,000 Rumanians in Transylvania, belong to the Uniate branch of the Roman Catholic Church. Their conversion to Catholicism took place about the end of the seventeenth century under strong political and clerical pressure.

The majority of the Orthodox live in Europe; in fact, Eastern Europe is almost completely orthodox. Then in Central Europe there are about 5,000,000 orthodox Russians in the present Poland and about a quarter of a million orthodox Czechoslovaks and Czechoslovak Russians. In Asia the largest orthodox group is made up of the Russians in Siberia, about

eight millions. In Western Asia, of the one-time broad Christian masses, only small oases are left, in Syria and Palestine. This is true in Africa as well, where Christianity is represented chiefly in Egypt, in and about Alexandria and Cairo. In the Americas (especially in North America) and in Australia there are scattered about a million orthodox immigrants, mainly Russians, but including Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians and Rumanians.

Statistics show the following approximate numbers for different orthodox nationalities: Greeks, $5\frac{1}{2}$ millions; Russians, 120 millions; Serbs, 6 millions; Bulgarians, 5 millions; Rumanians, 12 millions; Georgians, $2\frac{3}{4}$ millions; Arabs, 320,000; Albanians, 200,000. Thus the Russians take the lead with 120 millions, or the orthodox Slavs altogether, with 132 millions. The Rumanians are second with 12 millions, then the Greeks with about 6 millions. The total of all orthodox peoples is between 146 and 150 millions, and this does not include small groups of Arabs, Albanians, Letts, Esthonians, Lithuanians, Czechs, Japanese, Chinese, and others.

The Orthodox Church consists of a number of so-called autocephalic or only autonomic churches. The oldest of these are the four eastern patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. The world war and the resulting national and political changes have left their mark in many altera-

tions in various churches of Orthodoxy. Two forces have wrought these changes, one tending to separate and the other to unite. The first influenced the patriarchate of Constantinople, the Church of Bulgaria and the Russian Orthodox Church ; the second affected the other national or state churches. As a parallel to the political changes in the former Russian empire, the Orthodox Churches in Poland, Finland, Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania, separated themselves from the Russian Church and instituted themselves as free (autonomous or autocephalic) churches. Beside this, within the Russian empire, the Georgian and parts of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church have also been separated. Within the Russian Church itself great changes have resulted from the revolution and the anti-orthodox policy of the Soviet Government. Among these are to be noted : the separation of Church and State, the Soviet Government's persecution and the complete nationalization of church property, the practically complete collapse of the Church's organization, its purification through trial by fire and martyrdom, and the new, mighty upthrust of its inner, creative powers.

As a result of the world war, the external substance of the patriarchate of Constantinople was almost completely dissolved. This, the mother Church of all orthodox churches, once so great and powerful, is now reduced to a ruin and a shadow, all its splendid and ancient

congregations in Asia Minor have been either dissolved or driven into Greece, even to the very last child. Most of the faithful have been driven out of European Turkey as well. Although the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 secured its place in Constantinople, the patriarchate now leads a very precarious existence, and consists of only about 300,000 souls. As a result of the war the Bulgarian Church lost territory in Macedonia, South-western Thrace and the Southern Dobrudja.

On the other hand, for almost all the other European orthodox churches, the world war proved to have a unifying effect. Thus the previously separated Serbian or Rumanian churches or territories united into autocephalic churches. The orthodox churches of the old kingdom of Rumania, of Transylvania, of the Bukowina and of Bessarabia united themselves into one Rumanian church, which in 1925 was elevated into a patriarchate. The churches of the old Serbian kingdom united with the churches of Karlowitz in former Hungary, of Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina (formerly in Austria) to form one Serbian Church, which became a patriarchate in 1920. In Greece the various sections of the Church have not yet been able to form a union. Within the new Greece there are still two separate churches: an independent church of the old kingdom, with its centre in Athens, and that of the "new Greece" (the territories which have fallen to

Greece since the Balkan and world wars), which is a special autonomous church territory with its centre in Salonika. This is still maintained nominally under the patriarchate of Constantinople, chiefly for political-patriotic reasons and for the purpose of giving moral support to the Greek patriarchate in Constantinople.

The present-day autocephalic or autonomous orthodox churches are as follows: (1) The patriarchate of Constantinople, with about 300,000 souls, almost all Greeks; (2) the patriarchate of Alexandria, with about 50,000 souls, two-thirds of them Greeks; (3) the patriarchate of Antioch, with about 250,000 souls, of whom about nine-tenths are Arabs; (4) the patriarchate of Jerusalem, with 33,000 souls, practically all Arabs, although the leadership of the Church is in the hands of Greek monks of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem; (5) the Archbishopric of Cyprus, with about 180,000 souls, all Greeks; (6) the Russian patriarchate, with 120,000,000 souls, practically exclusively Russian; (7) the patriarchate of Serbia, with about 60,000 souls, almost all Serbs; (8) the patriarchate of Rumania, with approximately 13,000,000 souls, including about 800,000 Russians and 400,000 Bulgarians; (9) the Church of Greece, with about 5,000,000 souls, almost all Greek; (10) the Church of Bulgaria with about 5,000,000, all Bulgarians; (11) the Church of Poland, with about 5,000,000, all Russians;

(12) the Church of Georgia in Russia, with about 275,000 souls; (13) the autonomous Church of Albania, with about 120,000 souls, almost exclusively Albanians; (14) the autonomous Church of Finland, half Russians and half Finns, with about 60,000 souls; (15) the autonomous Church of Esthonia, with about 220,000 souls, 155,000 Russians, and 65,000 Esthonians; (16) the autonomous Church of Latvia, with about 240,000 souls, of these 170,000 Russians and 70,000 Letts; (17) the autonomous Church of Lithuania, with about 75,000 souls, all Russians; (18) the autonomous Church of Czechoslovakia, with about 250,000 souls, of these 200,000 Ruthenians and 50,000 Czechs; (19) the autonomous Russian Orthodox Archbishopric of North America, with 250,000 members, Russians; (20) the autonomous Archbishopric of Japan under Russian leadership, with about 35,000 souls, all Japanese.

It is thus evident that the special territory of orthodox Christianity has always been the East. It is also evident that the one great Church of Orthodoxy is that of Russia.

The Mother Church and the model for all the European orthodox churches was the so-called œcumenical patriarchate of Constantinople.

Until most recent times this patriarchate played a leading and supporting rôle for the Eastern and especially for the Southern European peoples, sometimes even for the

other three ancient orthodox patriarchates, This patriarchate gave rise to the idea of and the model for the broad and active participation of the laity in the life and management of the Church, which idea has been accepted and carried out in almost all the other orthodox churches. To-day this patriarchate is merely a symbol of the ancient, glorious past, and perhaps a symbol of the future. The same must be said of the other three ancient patriarchates, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. This must not be taken to indicate that the Greek nation has lost its significance for orthodox Christianity. Perhaps its former leadership and domination has disappeared, but not all its importance. Even to-day this small nation, energetic and mentally powerful, is still a bearer of Orthodoxy. But the centre of gravity has evidently passed over to the Eastern Slavs, and especially to the Russians. The colossal numerical strength of 120,000,000 souls, the great spiritual capacity of this nation, especially in the sphere of the feeling-side of religion, the great deeds which it has accomplished for Orthodoxy and for orthodox peoples, these plus the tremendous apocalyptic and the unfathomable power which trembles within it and demands expression—all this justifies us in considering the Church of Russia as the “world Church” of Orthodoxy.

Considered externally, all orthodox churches represent free communions. Within the bounds

of the œcumenical-orthodox rules of doctrine, regulation and cult, every separate orthodox church is free in its inner life and management. In all of these churches a synodal-communal constitution and government obtains. And in spite of this independence they cling closely and firmly together and feel themselves parts of one inseparable whole. They are really bound together by the bonds of faith and love and by their mystic appurtenance to one Body of Christ.

3

It is perhaps easiest to gain a general view of the historical development of the Orthodox Church as a whole by dividing it into four periods: the first, the period of "the Fathers" and the Church foundation, the first five centuries; the second, a period of inward consolidation and outward storms, the fifth to eleventh centuries; the third is the period of persecution and self-defence, from the eleventh to the nineteenth century; and the fourth period is a time of the new renaissance of orthodox Christianity. We still live in that period.

In the first period everything which in its essence may be called *Orthodox Christianity* received its basis and direction. In this period the basic truths, the basic forms or constitution, and the foundations of the cult of the Orthodox Church were established. The period may also be called the times of the great œcumenical

Church Fathers, by whom these fundamentals were set forth.

In the second period the bases laid down in the first five centuries are confirmed, and a further development of the general principles is to be observed, especially as concerns the cult. This latter was perhaps a necessary supplement to the dogmatic work of the first period. The Church's chief attention, however, is directed toward a series of unusually important events which threaten not only the doctrine, but its very existence. These events made it necessary that the Church should support itself more firmly on the fundamentals it had previously laid down, and thus they became all the more solid. Chief among these historical events are the rise of papal Rome and the advance of Mohammedanism. These two forces, the first from the West and from within, and the second from the East and from without, threaten the integrity and the existence of the Eastern Church. Both advance as if to take it by storm. To this is added the onslaught of a third force, the heathen Slavs. And finally, another fierce storm breaks out within its own midst, the iconoclastic controversy. This epoch can truly be called the most troubled in the history of Orthodoxy, a true storm-period, Kattenbusch and others to the contrary notwithstanding. The reasons for the differences between the East and Rome were inherent, even in the first five centuries. These differ-

ences rapidly became greater and more acute in the second period, leading finally to the separation between eastern Christianity and papal Rome.

The opinion is scarcely a satisfactory one that the real ground for separation between the East and Rome lay in the insatiable desire for power of the Roman or the Byzantine Bishop, or in the rivalry between the two. The true causes are deeper and more serious. Considered from a purely human standpoint, these reasons are certainly to be found in the differences in land and peoples, in the contrasts of spiritual tendencies and cultural development, in historical connections and constellations. On the other hand, the spiritual mysticism and the communal freedom characteristic of the eastern half of Christendom and the practical-monarchical traits of the western, Roman half, were not accidentally emphasized. Neither is it accidental that the Eastern Church has accentuated the harmonic conception of the divine-human, while Roman Catholicism lays more stress upon the human.

The advance of Mohammedanism led to the desolation of the three eastern patriarchates, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. The final result of the other two storms, on the contrary, was prosperity and growth for orthodox Christianity. The end of the iconoclastic controversy confirmed the mystic-real elements in the faith and piety of the Church,

and helped it to rise above the power of the State which had already become dangerous to its spirituality. The Church's greatest gain in this period, however, is the winning of the eastern Slavs for Orthodoxy. It was rich recompense for the loss of the three eastern patriarchates whose territory as early as the seventh century fell under the political power of Mohammedanism.

In the third period, that of outward pressure and inward defence, the whole attention of the Church is concentrated upon its self-maintenance. The advancing waves of the Mohammedan storm swept over and destroyed the south-eastern empires of the Byzantines, the Bulgarians, the Serbs, and the Rumanians. To this was added the desolation wrought by the Crusaders and their Latin kingdom in the East. At the same time the monstrous flow of Tatars swept over Russian orthodox territory. Turks and Tatars threatened the very existence of eastern civilization and eastern Christianity. Here the Church's iron endurance and its capacity to sacrifice for the faith had a double result : eastern Christianity maintained its own existence, and secured immunity and safety for the Christianity of the West as well. Orthodox Christianity fulfilled this œcumenical task also. It is evidently quite as impossible to speak of inactivity in this period as it is to look for the same type of rapid progress which the

former periods manifested. In a life-and-death battle the great concern is to escape death and rescue life.

The fourth and last period, from the nineteenth century on, I have called the new renaissance of Orthodoxy. During this time all the orthodox peoples, supported by the inner protective power of their churches, have been liberated from all foreign subjection and oppression, whether political or religious. At the same time the spiritual and religious ecclesiastical powers of these peoples have been freed, or have been able to turn their attention in new directions. This national liberation coincides with a blossoming of the spirit of Christianity. The orthodox churches have come into their own. We observe the parallel differentiation and new definition of relationships between Church and State, Church and Nation, Church and Culture. Thus dawns a period of new life for orthodox Christianity. On the very threshold of this new renaissance, orthodox Christianity has passed through two further great experiences: first, the trial and the purification by fire of the Russian Orthodox Church; and second, the free and fraternal contact with the third great section of Christianity, Protestantism, born out of western Christianity during the darkest and most sorrowful time of orthodox history. How this completely new situation of orthodox Christianity will develop in the future, we

can only imagine. I believe that I speak from the heart of Orthodoxy when I say that orthodox Christianity now faces the task of its *self-realization*.

4

So now I come to my question: What is this "self," the essence of orthodox Christianity?

I must make clear from the start, that it is impossible to give a brief and comprehensive answer to this question; impossible because there is no authoritative answer or formula for the definition of what "Orthodoxy" really is, and because neither the œcumenically valid decisions of the Church nor the so-called "symbolic" books offer any exact definition of the nature of orthodox Christianity. Even in orthodox theological literature there are no attempts at a satisfactory answer or explanation of this question. The chief efforts in this direction have been made by western theologians, chiefly Germans, but even they could give no definition on the basis of one *fundamental principle*.

The idea is very widespread, even among Orthodox themselves, that Orthodoxy is a kind of golden mean between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. But even though there be some truth in this idea, still it cannot be considered as the basic principle of Orthodoxy since the question remains open: what would

Orthodoxy be, removed from contact with Catholicism and Protestantism, or what would remain of Orthodoxy if the contrasts between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism did not exist? Glubkovsky's whole argument in his *Orthodoxy* is chiefly directed against this theory. As his main thesis he uses the idea that Orthodoxy is not merely a mean between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, but an abundance, an abundance all-comprehensive. Florensky and Zenkovsky hold this same conception. Katansky sees the chief element of Orthodoxy in the principle of "balance" which it maintains between the human element which predominates in the Roman Church and the Divine element which has greater weight in Protestantism. Although there is some truth in this idea also, still it cannot be accepted as the real, basic principle of Orthodoxy. Considered from the Orthodox confessional standpoint, it is true that orthodox Christianity is a central unity, but it is untrue that it has stopped still at some sort of cross-roads. Neither will an attempt at comparison help us: comparing Orthodoxy with Roman Catholicism or with Protestantism will give us valuable material for characterizing it, but can never furnish us with the basic principle we are seeking. From the following exposition it will be evident where and in how far it is possible to speak of a material central principle or of an organizing basic idea in orthodox Christianity. During my whole

study I have had the feeling that the Johannine idea of the Incarnation of the Logos, or more exactly the unique union between God and man into what the Russians call a "dual-entity," is the material principle of the essence of orthodox Christianity, in faith as in life.

It is perhaps easier to make clear the characteristics of orthodox Christianity by a formal approach. Let me speak of two such formal principles: first, the name, and second, the antiquity of orthodox Christianity.

It has been truly observed that in its estimate of itself the Eastern Church places the chief emphasis upon the predicate *Orthodox*. But here immediately one is faced with the difficult question: What meaning for the Orthodox themselves has the name which they bear as a prime characteristic? The scholars of the West often seem to think that its meaning lies in the possession of the true faith, in the true guardianship of this faith; that this faith, further, is a concrete historic Orthodoxy, as it was defined and finished by John Damascene, after the great dogmatic conflicts. Still, if we ask the Orthodox themselves, we learn that for them this definition is quite elastic and very indefinite in content. In reality we feel that "Orthodoxy" consists not only in the true "teaching," but also in true "faith"; and not in these two alone, but also in the true "worship," which means to praise God and to live according to His teaching.

In close connection with this first formal principle stands a second, namely, that the Orthodox Church is the *old* Church and wishes to remain so, the Church of the Apostles and the great Church Fathers, the Church of the first Christian era, of the time of the Œcumenical Councils and the undivided universal Church. The Orthodox Church considers herself to be, and to have remained, the direct heir and the true conserver of this old, holy Church.

In this sense the Orthodox Church is a church of "transmission," of tradition. But here I must call attention at once to something which in the West is often either misunderstood or not understood at all. The Orthodox Church considers itself to be the old Apostolic Church and the true preserver of the original Christian inheritance only in those basic truths of Christianity which are œcumenically determined or attested. Thus it is a church of tradition or a conservative church only in the relative sense of those words. It is therefore just as much a new church as an old, as these words may be used, for example, of the Holy Scriptures. Therefore the Orthodox Church is only in the least degree "bound" by its old inheritance; it has maintained complete freedom for development.

A few words should now be said about my chief sources and the standpoint from which my views are taken. The question of sources is especially important, because there is much

uncertainty, particularly in the West, as to whether and in how far a given source may be considered authentic. Many of the incorrect or biased descriptions of the Orthodox Church by western authors must be ascribed to their usage of doubtful or false sources.

In the first place the Holy Scriptures serve us as a source. We shall see later what a basic and influential position the Bible has in the life of the Orthodox Church.

Holy tradition has second place as a source. Note the difference which the Orthodox Church makes between tradition in the narrow and the broader sense of that word. The former is really very limited in extent, and this only is considered as unchangeable. This tradition is found only in the dogmatic decisions of the first seven Œcumenical Councils. To these should be added (of practically equal importance) the dogmas in which all the Church Fathers agree, as determined by a strict application of the principle of Vincent of Lerin: "Id teneamus quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est."

Of more relative importance are the liturgical books and the writings of the Church Fathers. In both of these the heart and the spirit of Orthodoxy are reflected. They are, so to speak, the rule and line of ecclesiastical consciousness. These must, nevertheless, be judged and evaluated with care, since they possess neither an independent nor an absolute authority.

The "symbolic books" of the Orthodox Church are of much less importance. By this term are usually meant the two following: the Articles of Faith of Peter Mogila, Metropolitan of Kiev in the seventeenth century; and second, the Decisions of the local Synod of Jerusalem (1672) and the Declaration of Dositheus, Patriarch of Jerusalem at this time, which was approved by that Synod. I say of much less importance, for the following reasons: in the West these books are almost universally considered as *symbolic* books, and treated as such, an assumption which puts many principles of the Orthodox Church in a false light. In reality, however, the Orthodox Church has no single *symbolic* book, at least not in the western sense. The only "symbol" of the Church is the Nicæan - Constantinopolitan Creed. The two creeds mentioned before have only local importance, since they were reviewed by local synods. They have no authoritative œcumenical significance, and therefore they must not be used either as absolutely valid or as credal statements. This view is making headway, even if slowly, in modern orthodox theological literature. As Glubokovsky says: "The Orthodox Church has no symbolic books: its only creed is that of Nicæa. Considering the so-called orthodox "symbolic" books as symbolic in the western sense of this term, leads to mistakes and misunderstandings."

As the result of this, many important points

of orthodox Christianity take on a very different sense and meaning. The catechisms of different local churches, for example, have no credal authority, not even the two best known and widest spread, the catechism of Platon, Metropolitan of Moscow, and especially the greater and lesser catechisms of the famous Metropolitan of Moscow, Philaret. But they are important, because they present the modern official view of the objects of faith. For our purpose orthodox theological literature is of no less importance. It gives a living picture of the situation and direction of the faith and the religious-ecclesiastical life of the present. This source is of special importance for us, because the liberal thought of orthodox theological science is advancing on a wide territory of free opinion ; and secondly, since I have been eager that my exposition should both give a true picture of this science and be based upon it. I consider this all the more necessary for the Christian West, since the newest theological literature, especially that of the eastern Slavs, is practically unknown there.

But I propose to consider other literature than the strictly theological. In Russia, especially, this literature is paralleled by that of religious philosophy as well as by much in belles-lettres. There such authors as Homyakov, Solovieff, the two princes Troubetskoi, Rosanoff, Gogol, Dostoyevsky, K. Leontieff, and others are considered the best orthodox

thinkers. Some of them, for instance Hom-yakov and Dostoyevsky, are even held to be modern fathers of Russian Orthodoxy. But in the present, as well, such philosophic forces as Berdiaeff, Karsavin, Lossky, Frank, and others are active and productive as Russian orthodox thinkers.

Finally, it is clear that my presentation, which is intended especially for western Christians, will often have to use the method of comparing the different confessions. This will be done with the purpose of making the essentials of orthodox Christianity more comprehensible, although I am greatly concerned lest I shall wrongly estimate something essential in western Christianity, or in some way judge it incorrectly.

NOTE.—The fact that these lectures were addressed to a German Lutheran audience naturally affects the author's use of the word Protestant. On the one hand he includes in this term all Churches of the West not in communion with Rome; important sections of the Anglican Church could scarcely be described as Protestant save in this very broad sense. On the other hand, Professor Zankov assumes for all Protestants a dogmatic agreement with Orthodoxy, which is not universally the case.
—EDITOR.

CHAPTER II

THE CREED

“I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life” (JOHN xiv. 6).

“I believe :

In one God, the Father . . .

In one Lord Jesus Christ . . .

Who for us men and for our salvation descended from Heaven and became man . . .

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life. Amen.”—

From the Nicæan-Constantinopolitan Creed.

I

BEFORE proceeding to an exposition of the fundamentals of orthodox Christian faith, some preliminary statements must be made. The dogma of the Church is really of small volume. Accepting the Bible as basis, it consists chiefly in the doctrine of the Œcumenical Councils concerning the Trinity and the Incarnation.

This dogma finds its best and briefest expression in the Nicæan-Constantinopolitan Creed. The Creed is therefore the most authoritative and the most important document of Church teaching, the “backbone,” the “compendium” of the dogmas, the absolute “norm of faith.” As Homyakov says, the Nicæan-Constantinopolitan Creed is “a full and complete confession of orthodox faith.” This

is the only Creed of the Orthodox Church. Its extremely great importance as the symbol of faith of the ancient and undivided Church has made it the basis of the catechisms of all Orthodox Churches. It is interesting to note also that this Creed has become the centre of the modern œcumenical movements for unity of the churches in faith and order. In both the "Faith and Order" conferences (Geneva, 1920, and Lausanne, 1927), this Creed was almost universally regarded as the basis for a union of the churches in faith.

The normal method of adding to the dogmas accepted by the Orthodox Church would be through decisions of the whole Church (œcumenical). The small number might easily have been increased by such practical and, so to speak, illegal means as elevating certain theses of tradition to the positions of dogmatic tenets of the Church. That this has not been the case is explained by the viewpoint, quite generally accepted in modern times, that strict lines must be drawn between "dogma," "theologumenon," and mere theological "opinion." According to this view, "dogma" is the true doctrine, fixed by an Œcumenical Council and accepted by the whole Church: only a thesis so determined has the obligatory character of a dogma. The faith of the Orthodox Church is thus objectively and formally expressed in revelation and in dogma, and the theological exposition of that faith must hold itself strictly

to these. This faith is the only objectively true and generally obligatory element in the Church. Beside these, there must be considered the "theologumena" of the Church Fathers and the propositions of orthodox theological science.

The general acceptance of this principle in the Orthodox Church is the result of the efforts of the great Russian Church historian, Bolotov. In his "theses" he set forth the following: First, "dogma" is the truth as determined by an Œcumenical Council. Second, "theologumenon" is the theological opinion of one or many of the holy fathers of the undivided Church. The content of the theologumena is probable truth: anyone may adhere to a given theologumenon until a competent church court has decided it to be faulty, just as on the other side no one can demand that a theologian should accept a theologumenon as his private opinion. Of course, the number of the fathers who accept a given viewpoint of this nature has no significance as to its validity; still, the greater the number who defend such a statement, the greater the probability of its truth. Third, and last, comes private theological opinion. In comparison with a theologumenon, private opinion has no authority. Each one is free in his personal opinion, but limited by the requirement that private opinion shall not conflict with dogma. The dogmas are "necessaria," the theologumena, "dubia": "In necessariis, unitas; in dubiis, libertas."

The opinion has become almost universal in the West, that in the Orthodox Church "to believe" means merely "to hold to be true," "to accept." This is not quite the case. Of course, believing is holding to be true, but not mere external and mechanical acceptance. It is rather an inward act of faith in God and His Church. Orthodox Christianity knows by experience this inward comprehension of the religious truths which are outwardly expressed in dogmas. In orthodox Christianity as elsewhere, the questions of vital importance are, *what* is to be comprehended in faith, and *how*. The historic fact that it was eastern Christianity which most actively concerned itself with dogmatic and speculative problems, that here the most bitter Christological battles were fought out, that eastern Christianity has been chiefly responsible for the investigation of Christological belief, all this is proof that Orthodoxy does not underrate the logical formulation and recognition of religious truths. But this is not the most important way. It comes second in the list, and is more formal and external. Orthodoxy's true method of comprehension is the inner, the spiritual, the intuitive, in brief, the mystical way of the heart, or, as I like better to say it in the words of the Gospel, the way of a pure heart. Herein the mystical and contemplative trait of orthodox Christianity finds its true meaning. But this must not be conceived as a passive process.

In the heart's mystical striving to comprehend religious truth, or at least to sense it directly, the inward changes are often so deep that we may truly speak of a conflict, of capturing faith by battle. For us it is less ratiocination than experience—a true experience which is higher than all reason.

One other thing holds the central place in this inward way of faith: the heart must be pure. Only then can it rise to this sublime height, when it is a loving heart, when it loves broadly, deeply, divinely; when it is only love, when it loses itself in Love Absolute. In this way one does not consider God; one experiences Him. We are with Him, in Him, He in us. There ensues a dual entity, superior to anything in this world: a complete unity between God and man. By this way of comprehension and of being comprehended, the highest aim of man is reached. Eternal life is to know God, to see God, to be blessed, to bear God in one's heart, to be borne of God and in God. Only in His love did God take upon Himself human form, becoming one with humanity in Christ, that we too should all sometime become one with Him.

“That which is inaccessible to all reason comes into our heart and dwells in it. He who is a mystery to the cherubim is found in our hearts. The earth cannot bear His footsteps: the pure heart bears Him in itself.” Thus orthodox Christianity does not neglect or deny

the necessity of "understanding" the dogmas, but rather emphasizes the fact that Christian truth may be really comprehended not by the ways of reason, but by the inner spiritual way of a pure heart. Only the loving and gracious heart can comprehend, can experience God.

In order that the individual should not become lost in his subjectivity, mistaking phantoms for revelation, he has the Church and lives in it. It is the pillar and confirmation of truth, because its head is Christ, its soul is the Spirit of Truth, its body unites the whole communion of Christians in love. This also assures that in articles of faith neither the extreme of despotism nor that of anarchy will reign. Love excludes one as well as the other.

By this means the orthodox Christian attains a vital comprehension of the content of faith or religious truth, as well as the certainty of the truthfulness of his faith. His faith is thus no lifeless formalism, no "magic of words," no empty fanaticism.

Inquiries about our confession of faith are usually accompanied by questions as to the development of Church teaching or the dogmas. A few words on this point: the Church is the guardian of Christian doctrine, but not in the sense that it keeps on repeating literally that which was entrusted to it, or considers this as something immovable, stiff, and dead. It makes possible (or does its best to make possible) an inner vital relationship between believer and

doctrine, and in this labour to comprehend the content of the teaching, the latter is more completely revealed, illuminated, and formulated. On the subjective, formal side, there may be, and there have been, changes or developments in dogmas. But objectively, so far as concerns their content, the principles of the Church's teaching always remain the same. The foundation is the same, only the form becomes richer, the subjective inclination fuller and deeper.

Let us now proceed to an exposition of the fundamentals of orthodox faith.

2

In the idea of God our Church and our theology do not differ from the teaching of the western churches. I should like to emphasize only one point. In spite of our conception of the boundless sublimity of God and the sense of our own nothingness, we orthodox feel God to be truly near, and have a deep confidence in Him. This comes first from the conception that God is the good God, that He is merciful and gracious to us, that He is Love. It arises also from the deep and continuous effect of the orthodox cult¹ by means of which the believer is brought to feel that God is immediately near and in him.

¹ The word "cult" is used throughout this book in an unusual sense, but no better English word has been found to indicate the concept here dealt with. "Cult" means the whole of the symbolic and ritual side of church life: not ceremonial observance alone, but the spiritual conceptions it represents.

3

In its doctrine of the Holy Trinity, Orthodoxy exhibits strong individuality, an individuality which is traditional from the earliest times. This teaching has always been its glory, and the Church has remained faithful to it. From the first, orthodox thought has concerned itself in the problem of the Trinity, and even to-day this problem frequently occupies religious philosophical thought, and with greatly heightened interest. Two points in the doctrine of the Trinity have always attracted the special attention of orthodox thinkers : first, the problem of unity in love in connection with the unified inner life of the Divine Trinity ; and second, both the principal and practical meaning of the Trinity (both the theological and the popular) in connection with the doctrine of salvation by the unified action of justice, love, and holiness, both within the life of the triune God and outwardly among men.

The modern orthodox theological conception of the effect of the Trinity in the world may briefly be expressed as follows : God the Father is the basis or the cause of everything ; from Him everything proceeds. God the Son, or the Logos, is the realizer of everything, in creation, in guidance and redemption. The Holy Spirit is the completer of everything. In popular faith the conceptions of the first person of the Trinity, both as Creator, supreme

ruler, governor, and rewarder on the one hand, and as the good, loving Father on the other, are present at the same time. It is difficult to say whether these two run parallel, or are intertwined and penetrated one by the other. Both ideas are really early Christian. They are maintained in vividness and freshness both by the spirit of the whole cult, and especially by the icons, the holy pictures.

The orthodox conception of the Holy Spirit is equally vivid and warm. If the phrase is true that the Orthodox Church is a pneumatic church, this is the case because of the fullness and the reality of its faith in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the living principle, the "soul" of the Church. The Holy Spirit is in the Church as the Paraclete, the representative of Christ. Through it the appropriation of the work of salvation is accomplished: rebirth and sanctification. Through the sacraments all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, all the streams of Divine grace, come into the Church. We receive, directly from the Spirit, Divine power for our spiritual, creative, personal, and social life. Thus the peculiarity and special meaning of the orthodox conception of the Holy Spirit consists in this, that it rests retrospectively upon the ancient ground of revelation (and the Church), and at the same time has a forward-looking confidence in the creative activity of the Holy Spirit for all time to come.

Another element in the specially orthodox

conception of the Holy Spirit is the retention of the Nicæan-Constantinopolitan doctrine and formula concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit; in other words, the rejection of the "filioque." The great conflict about the filioque is no mere logomachy.

4

In orthodox Christianity, as elsewhere, of course, the second person of the Trinity is thought of chiefly as the Saviour. But the specific trait of orthodox Christianity here, that which really forms the heart of its teaching, is the special, central meaning which the dogma of the Incarnation has for us. Orthodoxy emphasizes alike the Incarnation (God becoming man) and the "deification" of man resulting from it. The inward and eternal redemptive union between God and man in the divine-human person of Jesus Christ is the historical foundation for the new reality of salvation, of making humanity Divine, of the transfiguration of the world. This basic idea runs like a central nerve through all the faith and life of the Orthodox Church.

Let us look more closely at this fundamental dogma of orthodox Christianity. The religious life is elevation to God and God's descent to men, the inward communion between God and men. But both history and experience show that this communion is not always evident

or not always complete. Some disturbance, some interruption of the communion has occurred. Between God and men lies sin: the fall of man through sin. The sin of the first man was a voluntary transgression of the law and the will of God. Inwardly it was aversion and defection from God; externally it was lawlessness, a transgression of God's will, arrogance toward God. The result of this sin was the loss of the inward, immediate communion with God, and the spiritual and physical corruption of human nature. This did not completely destroy the good side of man's nature although the damage was so great and so deep that man was no longer capable of freeing himself, unaided, from its results. Alone, he lacks the capacity to become fit to enter again into intimate communion with God. If sin is defection from God, then it is a life without God; it is no longer true being. Sin thus means also a darkening of the soul, weakness of the will, unrest and uncertainty, inward and outward trouble, derangement and decay—yes, death itself. For the orthodox, sin and death have always been two sides of one and the same thing. But, considered externally and in the light of Divine justice, sin is also guilt which must be wiped out and which man himself cannot annul, for the same reasons as for his incapacity to eliminate the material results of sin. But is the sin of Adam also the sin

of the entire human race? Can this first sin be inherited? Or is the so-called original sin rather the result of the first sin? In orthodox Christianity this is an open problem for free opinion. Orthodox theology holds that the first sin is transmitted through Adam to all of humanity, but different explanations are given of the how and why. In general, the opinion is that what was transmitted through Adam to all humanity is not really sin, but rather its results: corruption, sinful inclinations. For us there is the ever-present oppressive fact of sin or man's unconquerable sinful inclination, as well as his suffering and his death. For this reason the whole world longs for salvation.

Salvation from what? From sin or from death? Western theologians like to make this contrast, and claim that the orthodox put death in the foreground instead of sin. But this is scarcely true. Orthodoxy is quite inclined, it is true, to conceive of original sin as the result of the first sin, and death as the reward of sins, yet, as has been said, empirically one is not separated from the other: where sin is, there is death also, and vice versa. The burden of sin and death is so terribly oppressive that for the orthodox the central question of his soteriology is not "salvation for what?" or "salvation from what?" To the orthodox the question "why salvation?" is very clear: in order to be free from sin and death, in order

to break down the wall of partition between God and men, to enter into inner and complete communion with God, to be at one with Him.

So we come to the one real question of orthodox soteriology: through whom does salvation come? It comes through the Incarnation, or through the God-man, Christ, or through the eternal dual-entity of God and man, through the eternal communion of God and man in Jesus, in which the basis and the pledge of salvation is given, the restoration of communion between sinful man and God. This is why orthodox soteriology is essentially Christology. In this fact is to be sought the reason why, from the very earliest times, orthodox Christianity has been concerned not so much with soteriology as with the being and person of the God-man.

We may be saved, and we shall be saved, because of the God-man, Christ: not man alone, that is clear; but also not God alone, without man. God became man, He took upon Himself the nature of man, ennobled it; human nature became Divine and entered into eternal union with God. Through this relationship we, too, are saved. For He who is at once God and man, is the new spiritual Adam, the new merciful head of mankind, of all of mankind as of one living organism.

Now Orthodoxy proceeds to a second idea and says: because we have the God-man, Christ, and He has us, through Him we enter

into a unity with God in which our nature, too, is made Divine and will be eternally with God. Kattenbusch perceived an essential truth, although he expressed it in rather sharp language, when he said that the Christian East was primarily concerned with being able to think that Christ has communicated to men a new natural quality, that His person possesses a natural power which works in the nature of men for their salvation, for their protection from death. The important thing was the "endowment" of Christ, and not His activity. This is basically a correct judgment, since the divine-human "endowment" of the person of Christ is certainly the chief moment in the work of salvation: the assurance of the possibility of freedom from sin and death, the possibility of becoming perfect, as man once became, in the unity with God, the Logos. Kattenbusch's mistake lies in the idea that eastern Christianity has no regard for the activity of Christ. This is not correct, since the God-man Christ, if a reality at all, is an active reality. There have been great and violent conflicts in the East over the *nature* of the connection, the unity of the two natures of Christ. And these long conflicts are in themselves an indication of the great importance which eastern Christianity assigns to the activity of Christ as well as to His nature.

According to the orthodox doctrine, then, concretely, in what does Christ's work of

salvation consist? It must be stated at once that in the Orthodox Church the problem of salvation has remained as it was in the early Church : not defined, not detailed. Orthodoxy has really no other œcumenically authoritative doctrine on this question than that which is given in the Nicene Creed. This means that outside certain universally recognized statements Orthodoxy leaves the greatest freedom of private opinion to theological thinkers on this question. These universally accepted theses are : Christ's appearance among us, His Divine humanity, and His *whole* life, in which He showed by His own example the way of salvation and of sanctification, through which He has given us the revelation and the proof of Divine truth, the example of a pure, holy, loving life.

If we tried to express in one sentence the whole doctrine of the Orthodox Church, it would be something like this : Christ accomplished our salvation by His whole life, but especially by His death and resurrection. Thus He finished the work which, both objectively and subjectively, was absolutely necessary to free mankind from sin, guilt and death, and to make it possible for man, thus purified and ennobled, to enter into communion with God and, in this close communion, to live.

In our theological literature, especially that of Russia, opinions differ greatly over the question of the meaning and the sense of the

sacrifice on the cross, or the work of salvation as an act of satisfaction, as atonement for the cancellation of sins and guilt before an "angry and insulted" God. Many western theologians go astray when they think that among orthodox Christians, or in orthodox theology, Christ's death on the cross is rarely considered or plays no important part. Aside from the fact that both in orthodox theology and in the orthodox cult, much intensive attention is given to the death on Golgotha as a work of salvation, it would be sufficient answer to this opinion to consider the unusually large place which the cross, or the sign of the cross, symbol of the death on Golgotha, has in the private and liturgical life of Orthodoxy. The cross *has* its great importance for us. Just what the meaning of the death of Christ in the work of salvation is, is a great point of controversy in modern orthodox theology.

At one time almost the whole of Russian theology was strongly under the influence of the western scholastic attitude toward the problem of salvation. Non-Russian orthodox theology in general still maintains this viewpoint. A movement away from the western view is to be noted, however, until to-day, after much labour and effort in this field of thought, Russian theology defends the objective-dogmatic importance of the work of salvation on the one hand, and on the other, emphasizes the ethical and the subjective-dogmatic meaning

of this work, almost universally denying the juridical and formal conception.

According to this opinion, the objective-dogmatic importance of the work of salvation consists in the reconciliation which it made possible. This reconciliation was necessary for God, but it was a relative, and not a juridical necessity. It was necessary for man, since man could not cancel the results of sin. This only Christ could do, since He was God-man, and by His sacrifice He accomplished the reconciliation.

No less strongly is the ethical and the subjectively-dogmatic importance of salvation represented in the new Russian theology (parallel with, or quite independent of, the conception of the objectively - dogmatic significance of salvation). This holds that reconciliation with God is accomplished in man by the fact that through the influence of the work of Christ, of Christ's suffering love, man is freed from the pressure of fear before God as judge and rewarder, and so attains faith that he has received pardon from God.

Almost without exception, modern Russian theologians emphatically repudiate the juridical and formal theory of salvation, and they cannot understand how it is possible to ascribe to God so much anthropomorphism, and to attempt to present the sublime and mystical work of salvation in the form of a legal process or a duel. They consider it better to admit that

rationally it is still a mystery how the Saviour's death conquered death and sin, than to identify the process of salvation with a process in court.

Christ's resurrection is inseparably connected with His death on the cross. For the Orthodox Church, as well for its theology as for its popular conceptions, salvation is only finally complete in the resurrection. Sin and death are conquered, and life is bestowed upon men. Only the resurrection is the real earnest of salvation and of eternal life. On this account Easter is, as is well known, the greatest and most holy of all the festivals in the Orthodox Church year: the climax of the Christian life, and the joy of Easter means complete reconciliation, perfect love, the longed-for unity: eternity has entered into time through the risen God-man, but time has also entered into eternity, through the risen God-man. The church celebrates Easter with exultant songs, the people tremble in joyful feeling, because the resurrection guarantees eternal life for every one and the transfiguration of the whole world.

5

The orthodox teaching as to the acceptance of salvation or the realization of redemption rests on two foundations: first on the idea of the continued work of the Saviour in the Church as head of the Church, and combined with it, the Divine activity through the Holy

Spirit in the Church either directly or through the means of grace; and secondly, on the activity of man's own faith: conversion and forgiveness of sins through baptism, life according to the will of God and by the grace of God, attainment of holiness, of eternal salvation. These two elements are not mutually exclusive, neither do they run parallel to each other; rather they operate in closest unity together and in each other. The basis and the symbol of this lies in the close connection of the two in the God-man.

In this connection the problem of the relationship between grace and freedom comes into the foreground of orthodox faith. By grace is generally understood the undeserved love, the mercy which God, in spite of all our guilt, evidences toward sinful men instead of stern justice. Mercy is thus a quality of God. It is, nevertheless, held to be a gift, an active power of God, which is offered to man, and must be accepted by him, in order to be effective. In general, the Orthodox Church and theology stand here on the basis of the ancient Church. Here, too, we find the way open for free consideration and study and a variety of opinions. What is the fundamental direction? It is very well expressed in the following formula: "Salvation is neither something discovered independently by man nor something forced upon him; it is rather something offered for him to accept. The Divine impulse requires from man an act of

independent acceptance—faith and works are the means as well as the characteristic of all Christianity.” The most modern orthodox theology and religious philosophy accepts this viewpoint in principle. The two elements are thus considered not antithetically but synthetically. Although this general thesis is universally accepted, there are different views as to the details of the question: some thinkers accept the simultaneous action of the grace of God and the will of man, others hold that first man’s will acts, and then Divine grace, still others, that the work of grace precedes. The ruling opinion in modern Russian theology is that of simultaneous action, in which the two operate in mutual dependence and as an organic unity: grace works in freedom and freedom in grace. Still grace has always the most important place (1 Cor. xv. 10). As Frank says: “For the orthodox there is no dispute as to the relationship of grace and free-will, since this dispute (in the West) is based on a certain separation and a tension between man and God, between the subjective, inward, personal, and the objective, outward and superpersonal moments in the religious life. Not striving toward God is the essential element in orthodox religious ontology, but rather existence *in* God.

The questions of faith and works arising from this problem are also considered and solved by the orthodox synthetically. It is

interesting to observe the misunderstandings in the West which arise from the antithetic statement of the question: on one hand Orthodoxy is criticized as justified in works, and thus as crudely anti-Protestant, while on the other side it is condemned as contemplative, inactive, and thus sharply anti-Roman. In reality Orthodoxy is neither one nor the other. Or, if you will, it is both, but in an inward, synthetic conception and unity. Faith and works are two inseparable elements in one and the same being. Thus orthodox Christianity is ethical as well as pneumatic, both conceived together in one. Orthodox people are surprised that others can separate faith and works, since each presupposes and contains the other.

Homyakov writes: "Not works save us, but faith. Faith, however, is not a double thing, rather it is uniquely true and vital, thus those are as unreasonable, who say faith alone cannot save us, that works are also required, as the others who claim that faith saves without works: for if there are no works, then faith is dead; if it is dead, it is untrue; for in the true faith in Christ is the Truth and the Life. . . . If faith is true, it is living, that is, active."

Of course this view does not at all mean a justification by works, self-justification; it is no conception of works as a method of earning salvation before God. Just as a false sense of justification by works may arise through false

emphasis on works, so, by wrongly emphasizing faith, there can also be a self-justification in faith. For Orthodoxy the truthfulness and the vitality of faith in works means least of all desert, or a right to salvation.

Salvation is first and last a work of the grace of God: "Christ works everything in us," says Homyakov, "whether in faith or in hope or in love." The famous Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow gives especially faithful expression to orthodox thought on this point: we must "guard the inner conviction that we are nothing and have nothing except what God gives us, and that we can do nothing good without the help and grace of God. . . . To express it briefly in the words of John Chrysostom, be humble! What shall we understand by the expression righteousness? Although one may understand this to mean every virtue for which the Christian should strive, as for food and drink, still one should chiefly understand it to mean the righteousness spoken of in Daniel (ix. 24), the conviction that eternal blessedness, *i.e.* the justification of guilty man before God, is achieved through the grace of Jesus Christ and faith in Him."

The second point in which Orthodoxy exhibits a special attitude toward salvation is the faith, maintained since earliest times, in the deification of man or, better, in a pre-vision (*Ahnung*) of the deification of man. The idea is Athanasian, and is to be found in others of

the fathers, as for example in the pseudo-Areopagites, or in Irenæus: "God the Logos became that which we are, in order that He should make us that which He is." The same idea is to be found in Gregory the Theologian, Gregory of Nyssa, and others, up to John of Damascus. This thought weaves itself into the liturgical songs of the Church in the Middle Ages, and finds expression in the writings of many theologians and religious thinkers of the present, especially the Russian.

In what does this "deification" consist and how is it achieved? The answer usually given is rather general, indefinite and lacking precision. It is quite clear that this idea, as now held or as stated in the early fathers, embodies no expression of, or tendency toward, pantheism. But neither is it a mere allegory, as would be the case if we were to understand it to mean merely a "spiritualization," a "renewal" of human nature, or a "communion with God." The thought which is uppermost in most minds is that human nature, by the grace of God in Christ, reaches such a degree of holiness and perfection that its mystic-real communion with God in Christ is so indissolubly penetrated by God, that it becomes like God; its situation and the nature of its union with God become very like the situation of the deified human nature of the Son of God and the union of the two natures in the God-man Christ. In explaining this process many have used the analogy of the

union of fire and iron. Fire (God or the Divine) does not enter into the iron (man or the human), is not transferred to it, but instead retains its own place. One transfers to the other its own power (fills the human completely), and still is not smaller itself. Or, the fire penetrates the iron and still is not blackened by it.

In close connection with this doctrine of the deification of man, of the whole man, is the orthodox teaching about the human body. From the incorrect impression that orthodox Christianity is completely ascetic and monastic, and even evidences a dualistic mood toward the body, many consider the idea to be orthodox that the body is to be despised as something evil, as the prison of the soul, the source of sin, corruption and death. This is not at all the case. From the time of the earliest fathers up to the best representatives of orthodox thought of modern times, the body has been considered not as something evil but, on the contrary, as a creation of God which in itself is good and beautiful. Philaret of Moscow says: "God created the body with its natural qualities and functions, and He did not create it for death." The body is not sinful in itself, but rather, like the soul (perhaps even less than the soul), it is under the influence of sin. Human salvation is the redemption and healing of the *whole* man, the body as well as the soul. The body also is saved from death. Hence the doctrine

of the resurrection of the body, yes, even of the transfiguration, of the deification of the body, just as the body of Christ was transfigured and made Divine. This is quite Pauline (Phil. iii. 20, 21): "... the Lord Jesus Christ who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be confirmed to the body of His glory. . . ." The orthodox world is specially fond of the quotation from Paul, made so effective by Chrysostom: "Not 'unclothed,' that is deprived of our bodies, but—'clothed upon'" (2 Cor. v. 4). Here again Orthodoxy stands on a basis of the unity of the two natures of Christ and of His resurrection, and so, in this point as well, Orthodoxy is not antithetic but synthetic.

6

The faith in the existence and activity of good and evil spirits, of angels and demons, belongs among the chief points of orthodox faith. We hold this belief to be truly evangelical and primitively Christian. The universality and vitality of this faith is recognized and felt in the broadest masses of the people. The angels are the servants of God in His work of direction and salvation of the world; they are His warriors against the demonic powers in the world. Countries, cities, churches, every individual person—each has its guardian angel. The Church prays every day: "For an angel

of peace, the true guide, the guardian of our souls and bodies." Whoever knows Orthodoxy will have to admit that this popular faith has an extraordinarily great practical and ethical significance.

As a pendant to this faith we have belief in demons as tempters of men and contestants with the angels for the fate of the human soul. This higher world of pure spirits, good and evil, gives a deeper meaning to the orthodox conception of the universe and makes the battle for good against evil much sharper and more serious. It is all crowned by the certainty that the battle against evil will succeed, and the confidence in the victory of Christ, our Head, over the evil and demonic in the world.

7

A few further words on the eschatology of orthodox Christianity. The final fate of men and of the world, the final act of the work of salvation of Christ and the Church, the final word of the just but all-loving God, the final coming of Christ and the collision between Christ and antichrist—at last the eternal Kingdom of God—these are ideas and moods which, warm and deep, exert a powerful influence upon orthodox people, spiritual leaders and laity alike. Perhaps more than any other branch of Christianity, Orthodoxy has retained the eschatological character of the Church of the first century. It

has a vivid sense of expectation of the coming of the Kingdom of God. Orthodoxy is not very strongly inclined to understand by this term the externals of the Christianity at present in the world, but on the other hand, neither is it considered so unimportant as to be left completely out of account. This is perhaps the reason why the spirit of Orthodoxy refuses to let itself be bound to the good things of this earth, because it lives in expectation of the future with a tremendous final struggle between Christ and antichrist. There is a certain amount of truth in Berdiaeff's, perhaps too caustic, comment: "The western Christian world so orders itself, as though all of this (the last battle between Christ and antichrist, the future transfiguration of the world, the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem, etc.) would never happen; it has forgotten the end of the world, the transfiguration of the world, Christ's return to the earth. Its city is here on earth, and it is busy enlarging and perfecting it." This attitude explains why in Orthodoxy the Apocalypse is one of the best-loved books, and why the problem of antichrist and of Christ's second coming is such a favourite theme for both laymen and religious philosophers.

One of the special traits of orthodox eschatology is its inward, intimate connection of the personal-dynamic with the cosmic-mystic. By this I mean the apocalyptic sense which still pulses strongly in the basic thought of orthodox

Christians : the foreboding, the hope, the faith, that at the end of all time the God of love will, in His mercy, receive everything into Himself ; that all things will be saved. It is true that, in its Origenistic conception, this doctrine was rejected by the Fifth Œcumenical Council. Nevertheless, few Orthodox can calmly and completely accept the idea that, regardless of the love and mercy of God, damned men and eternal sin should exist in all eternity. They well understand the deeply antithetic and antinomian nature of the problem, since here the love of God and the freedom of man may seem to be opposed to each other. But just as in all the other great problems of faith, Orthodoxy seeks a synthesis and tries to conceive the solution in a mystically intuitive way, seeking for them all a final solution through Love and in Love, so it is in this last of all problems. The best orthodox thinkers of ancient as well as of modern times, like Solovieff, or Berdiaeff, or even Florensky, have sought with trembling hearts a rational conquest of the antithesis. But the simple heart of our common folk has solved the problem otherwise. In a humble village church in Russia an old peasant woman set a candle before the picture of the Last Judgment. "Why do you do that?" someone asked. And she answered : "No one seems to be praying for him. We ought to pray for him, too." She meant "for the devil," but she would not speak his name in the church. In

this simple soul an all-embracing, deep, pure love gave hope for the final blessedness of every one, and this hope in its turn strengthened and increased her love.

This is typical of our piety: our faith is the faith of hope and love, a love of which God is the end and the beginning, and all in all.

As a footnote to this chapter, I should like to add a few words about modern orthodox theology. Theology is the study of faith; theology helps to explain faith, and even to arouse or deepen it. In broad circles of western theology it has become almost a universal custom to pass negative judgment on orthodox theology: it is said to have no life of its own; to be purely superficial. Such judgments, I believe, are based chiefly on misunderstanding, or lack of understanding, due to the inaccessibility of orthodox theology ensuing from difficulties of language. As has been already remarked, the largest and best portion of orthodox theology is available only in Russian. So few western students of orthodox thought have been able to read its records in the original. A specialist like Krumbacher, who knows the languages of the East, writes: "Anyone who has to concern himself with the history of the Greek orthodox churches or their literature, with Oriental Church law or with any branch of philology and history, with the political, ecclesiastical, and national questions

of the peoples who until recently have been under Turkish rule, encounters publications in Russian at every step of the way." After a long interruption, modern theological scientific interest began to manifest itself anew at the beginning of the nineteenth century. A still greater development is to be noted toward the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, first and chiefly in Russia, secondly among the Greeks, and later among other orthodox peoples. A detailed exposition of the development of modern Russian theological science was published in Petrograd just before the Civil War by N. N. Glubokovsky, but was destroyed during the Revolution and has not yet been reprinted.¹ The starting-point and the main direction of orthodox theology is not to create faith, but rather to study it; to awaken, to enlighten, to deepen faith. As we remarked at the beginning of this chapter, orthodox dogma is of comparatively small extent. Thus, orthodox theology still has a wide and fruitful field for free labour and the unhindered development of its pathos of inspiration.

¹ This important Russian work, in abbreviated form, has just been published in Warsaw. (*Russian Theology, its Historical Development and Present Situation*. Synod Publishing House.) —ED.

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH

“ . . . : the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all ” (EPH. i. 23).

“ . . . that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the House of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth ” (1 TIM. iii. 15).

I

IN closest connection with the orthodox principles of faith in Christ as God-man and the Saviour, stand its principles of belief about the Church.

It is the firm conviction of Orthodoxy that its Church is Christianity. The Orthodox Church believes and maintains that it is the Church of Christ, the unbroken continuation of the old and undivided Church, the true guardian, the pillar and foundation of revealed truth, the holy mediator of the grace of the Holy Spirit, the preferred instrument of God for the salvation of mankind.

The Church is the free community of love in Christ ; as a “ mother ” it embraces all those of whom Jesus Christ is Head and Saviour ; it contains within itself every one of these faithful. The Church fills the whole life of the believer ;

it never leaves him alone in anything, not even before God ; it nourishes him with grace and love ; it accompanies and leads him to eternal life.

This conception of the great importance of the Church is based on two fundamental ideas. First : just as, for our salvation, God and man are really and mystically united in the God-man, so all the faithful must be united in a mystic-real union with the God-man Christ. This union is the Church. The Church is therefore a mystic-real organism ; a body whose head is Christ and whose members are Christians. And secondly : only within this organism, only in essential union with this body can there be salvation. The phrase, "outside the Church there is no salvation," is understood in this sense. Only in this respect can one speak of the Church itself as the "foundation dogma" of Orthodoxy. The foundation dogma is actually Christ, the God-man. In as far as the Church of Christ is His body in which everything human is sanctified and made Divine, in so far is the doctrine of the Church the foundation dogma of orthodox Christianity.

2

What is the essence of the Church ?

On this point the Orthodox Church has no authoritatively fixed definition. There is none, because there was also none in the ancient

Church. The early fathers left neither a book nor even a special chapter in their writings about the Church.

The one authoritative definition of the Church is the well-known phrase of the Nicene Creed about the "one, holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church." Otherwise, it is often claimed that the Church or "churchdom" are indefinable, since "it is impossible to lay out the body (the fullness) of Christ in the narrow coffin of logical definition." Nevertheless many theologians, especially in recent times, have undertaken to give a comprehensible definition of the essence, the qualities, the functions, etc., of the Orthodox Church.

The Church is a union, or more correctly a unity, and still more correctly an *organic* unity; an *organism*. In this organism are united in one the God-man Christ and all those souls which have been saved by Him, and united so really and mystically that He is the divine-human Head and the Christians are His body, or the members of His body. The Church is not merely a "society" or a "community" or a "league." It is organism and body of Christ in the most real, even if unfathomably mystic sense. We perceive only certain parts of this mystical body, and these usually from without; their inner content only Christ knows. When Paul (Eph. v. 22 ff.) spoke of the Church as the *body* of Christ, he indicated most exactly the essence of the Church, and this certainly not in

the figurative but in the most real sense of the word ; in the real and at the same time in the super-real sense ; in the same divine-human sense as that which is the essence of the organism and its head. Chrysostom uses a telling image to express this mystical relationship : just as from many single grains *one* loaf of bread is made, so we, who are many, form *one* body of Christ. Or the following much more adequate parallel : just as the two natures, the Divine and the human, are joined in one in the person of Christ, unified and harmonic, even though we cannot understand this, just so harmonically and unitedly, just so organically, are the God-man Christ and Christians joined together in the Church : the Divine with the human, the invisible with the visible, the heavenly with the earthly. A mystical realization of this unity is the mystical union with Christ in the sacrament ("the mystery") of the Eucharist. In this regard the Eucharistic Communion is the truest symbol of the inner nature of the Church of Christ.

3

The Head of this divine-human organism is Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ alone. He lives in the Church : in all its members, in the souls and hearts, yes, even in the bodies of these members. He gives it life, power, and fullness. Without Him it is dead ; it does not

exist, but neither can He be without this, His body.

He is also the Church's soul and spirit, together with the Holy Spirit which He sends to it from the Father, through the Spirit bestowing upon the Church the gifts of grace, and thereby maintaining it in life and movement.

Not only is He alone the Head of the Church, but only He can be its Head, because on the one hand it can never be the body of a human being; and second, because He, as its Head, is a being at once human and Divine, and as such can never in any wise be replaced by an earthly being.

4

The members of this divine-human, spiritual-corporeal, heavenly-earthly body or organism, are all those who believe in Christ, those who remain here on earth and those who have passed beyond into heaven; yet more: not only men but the angels as well. Here in the Church, as its first member, taking precedence even above the angels, is the Holy Mother of God, the pure "Favoured One of God." Here are the angels, our companions in the fight and our heavenly protectors. Here also are the saints, although already divinely transfigured in holiness and grace, yet joined with us in prayer and love, and thus collaborators in God's work of salvation.

All they, like ourselves, are members of the one Church; they with us and we with them form *one* body, inseparably joined through the *one* Head, Christ, warmly conjoined among ourselves in the mutual communion of prayer and love. This inner unified conception, and at the same time the cosmic extension of the Church, forms one of the most tenderly intimate and sublime experiences of orthodox Christians, particularly in the liturgical sacrament. The Church's experience brings heaven very near to the Christian, and lifts earthly man to heaven. Heaven and earth are united and interpenetrated in grace and love.

A statement of this conception answers, almost automatically, the question of the visible and invisible Church. In reality there are not, and there cannot be two churches. The Church is *one* and only *one*, but with two sides or two elements, unitedly and inseparably bound together: the Divine, the spiritual, the invisible, with the human, the physical and visible, just as the two elements or natures are joined in the one person of Christ. The Church is visible: in the visible section of its earthly members, in the visible forms of its union and activity on earth. It is invisible for human eyes in its spiritual, mystical side, in its Divine part and in the changes in its members through the powers of the body of Christ and the Spirit of God. In the Church are all its invisible members (the saved and the saints), just as

well as all those members still living upon earth, including even sinners; for through the Church and in the Church all men (and all the sinners) are gradually made holy and perfect. Love, the creative principle of the Church, eliminates every separation between sinners and the just. The basic purpose of the Church demands that it should seek out the wandering and the sick, accept them into itself, and from them create one holy people of God. This truly patristic principle is an essential element in Orthodoxy.

We Orthodox are afraid of the antithetic statement of the question, for if one accepts the visible Church, but still insists that only the just, the elect, belong to it, and at the same time makes it clear that one cannot know who these just are, he comes to the conclusion either that there is really only an invisible Church, or else that the visible is no true Church: in either case the outcome is an ecclesiastical nihilism. If we accept the second thesis, that the true Church is only invisible, but that, aside from a merely negative terminology it is impossible to state any definite content for it, again both theoretically and practically we arrive at ecclesiastical nihilism. For the Orthodox, such fears are all the more justified when they observe that the antithetic solution of the problem has brought western thinkers to results which terrify even their western brethren; have even moved many

toward new positions close to that of Orthodoxy.

So we hold finally and unshakably to the inseparable, essential, organic unity of the Church, in both its earthly and visible as in its heavenly and invisible aspects. We hold this just as we maintain unshakably the organic unity of the two natures in Christ, the God-man who, by the power of this unity, is the Church's Head.

5

If the Church is a church at all, it is the Church *of Christ*. But the Church of Christ is true and has the truth in it, because its Head is Christ, who is Himself "the Truth" (John xiv. 6), and because its soul is the Holy Spirit, who is the spirit of truth (John xvi. 3) who leads the Church into all truth. Orthodox Christianity believes and teaches that the Church is the unerring bearer and proclaimer of the truth. Only in the Church as the organic unity of truth and love can the full and unerring truth be given. Only in essential unity with the whole organism can the full truth be maintained for all its members and for each of them. The Church is, in the words of Paul (1 Tim. iii. 15), the pillar and support of the truth and the arc of salvation. Revealed truth has been given us, first of all, in the Holy Scriptures and in holy tradition. But what is the Bible, or what could it be, without the

Church? Could there ever have been a Bible without the Church? Without the Church, no canon. Without the canon, no Bible. Without the Bible, no faith, or only a halting faith or a concealed unbelief. So, without the Church, no true faith. He who does not accept the Church as the pillar and support of the truth has discarded the Bible with it. And vice versa, to accept the Bible means to accept the undeniable authority of the Church.

Homyakov gives a further statement of this viewpoint: "Protestants call the Bible the Holy Scriptures, but with what justification? Why do they ascribe such an absolute authenticity and authority to a book which is nothing more than a collection of separate writings, ascribed to different authors of whose very names we are not always certain? Does the authenticity come from the historic authenticity of its content? But such an authenticity, even if exactly proved by criticism, which is not at all the case, could have significance only for the historical part, which is only a very small portion of the Scriptures, and would be no guarantee for the dogmatic, by far the most important section. Or is it the names which give this guarantee? But these names are very often unknown or doubtful, and there is no shadow of foundation for believing the names of St Mark or St Luke or St Apollos to be more reliable than Papias or St Clement or St Polycarp. Yet the writings of these

latter are not recognized as having Biblical authority. Does the authenticity arise from the pure doctrine expressed in the Book? But then there must exist a norm for this doctrine, which is before the Bible and serves as a standard of its sanctity. The Canon, only the Canon, confirms the Bible as Holy Scriptures, and here not even the finest logic can undertake to separate the Canon from the Church. The Canon rests only on confidence in the Church. To accept the Holy Scriptures is to accept the irrefutable authority of the Church."

This is the case with the truth in the Church, which truth is preserved in its Catholic bosom in the form of holy tradition. It must be observed at the outset that Orthodoxy insists upon the most rigid test of the genuineness of tradition, in the narrower sense of that word. Accepting the classical principle of Vincent of Lerin, Orthodoxy applies it so completely and so strictly, that truly only that is generally recognized as truth preserved in tradition, which everywhere and always has been held by the whole community of the Church.

6

As will readily be seen from what has been said regarding the nature of the Church as expressed in the Nicene Creed, the distinguishing points of the Orthodox Church are: it is (a)

the "one," (*b*) the "holy," (*c*) the "Catholic," and (*d*) the "Apostolic" Church.

These characteristics all belong to the Church because its Head is Jesus Christ: it is "one" because its Head is one, and as His body it can be only one; it is "holy" because He who is the root of which the Church is the branch, is holy; it is "Catholic" because "He is all in all"; it is "Apostolic" because He is the chief of the apostles (He is before all the apostles), and because He chose and gave the apostles to the Church.

What are the views of orthodox Christianity about these fundamental qualities of the Church?

(*a*) The Church is one, because it has one Head. It is one body of Christ, from within or without, above or below. It has one faith and one doctrine, one spirit and one heart. It has one source, one cult, one creed, and one goal. In this all are agreed. But then arises the most important and actual question: in the orthodox conception, *which* is this one Church, when we have so many and so different historical churches? And is there such a thing as *one* Church? The latter question always astounds orthodox people: how can faith, how can the heart still hesitate or doubt, that, if Christ really existed and exists, and if one Church once existed because Christ ordained it, there is not to-day self-evidently and visibly one Church? To doubt the

existence of the visible Church would be to question the corner-stone of orthodox faith. Thus, although there are many and various churches, still the true and visible Church must exist. And so it really does. But which is it? The general and unanimous answer of Orthodoxy to this question reads: this *one* Church or *the* Church is the old undivided Church, the Orthodox Church. First, for the reason that the Orthodox Church remains true to the old Catholic basis; in other words, because it is the true and faithful continuation of the old and Catholic Church. But then are all other non-orthodox churches not true churches? In my personal opinion there is no authoritative answer to this question in the Orthodox Church, since after the separation between East and West and after the Reformation, no Œcumenical Council has been held which might have given this answer. Such an answer would, of course, have been accepted by the whole community of the orthodox churches.

The older and almost unanimous opinion on this question was that all non-orthodox churches are not true churches, and therefore that no non-orthodox Christians belong to the Church of Christ. And the practice of various local orthodox churches in the Middle Ages, a practice which continued into comparatively modern times, was based on this opinion. Thus formerly, non-Orthodox who entered the

Orthodox Church were re-baptized, marriages of non-Orthodox were held to be invalid, and marriages with such Christians were not permitted to orthodox Christians. Such strict views and practices were later abandoned, first in the Russian Church at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and later in all the others. This means, of course, a remarkable alteration in the attitude toward non-orthodox churches.

In Orthodoxy to-day there are two parallel opinions on the problem of the place of non-orthodox churches in the one Church of Christ. One opinion holds that only the Orthodox Church is *the* Church, and that all the others do not belong, since they have fallen away from it. This opinion has its supporters among hierarchs and theologians. It is still occasionally expressed in official statements of local orthodox churches. But this opinion is not consistently maintained, at least in practice, because its supporters do not oppose the present more liberal attitude of the Orthodox Church at large.

The second opinion holds that the Orthodox Church is the Church of Christ, but that the great historical non-orthodox churches are not to be considered as completely fallen away or separated from the Church of Christ. This position is more a matter of feeling: it has never been precisely formulated or supported in detail. We like to use analogies or images which express the general content of this

thought. In general one has the impression that this opinion is essentially as follows: the Church is *one*, and it embraces all who have been baptized in Christ. Thus just as all belong to the Church, righteous and sinners, so all men, individuals or groups ("churches"), belong to the Church. And just as single members may be ill, so whole groups may be erring or ailing members of the Church. All, saints and sinners, enlightened and erring, sound and sick, belong to the Church, in which through the grace of God and the love of the community, they will become sound and holy. Divisions have been made, chiefly for pedagogical and moral reasons, which form two general sections of the Church, an inner and an outer. But the boundaries of these sections are not absolute, hence the divisions they represent are not absolute. The walls of partition between us do not reach as high as heaven; they do not extend as high as Christ our Head, or as deep as the heart, the Holy Spirit. The Church is indeed a mystery, and the activity of the Divine elements and the love of all is the sublimest miracle. And so in humility and love we pray "for the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of God's holy churches and the union of them all." This is the general content of the second opinion which is held by many prominent Church leaders, many theologians and very many simple orthodox Christians, among which I dare to count myself.

The fundamental thesis of the Roman Church, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* has never been taught in the Orthodox Church, from bishop's throne or from the pulpit. And even if some similar expression has been used by individual orthodox theologians, it is only to be understood to imply that in the bosom of the Orthodox Church the Christian most certainly finds the means of Divine grace necessary for his salvation, *without indicating that it is impossible to find the means of grace outside*. Christian groups outside the Orthodox Church are considered Christians, and all taken together they make up the body of Christ. Thus the Encyclical of the Œcumenical Patriarch in 1920 about the foundation of a church union for general religious-ethical and practical Christian co-operation, could be directed "to all churches of Christ," and this explains also why it frequently happens that patriarchs of the Orthodox Church in their letters to heads of other churches address them unhesitatingly as "dear brother in Christ" just exactly as they are accustomed to address the prelates of the Orthodox Church itself.

This attitude is supported by many important facts of the present general practice of the Orthodox Church, such as the recognition of properly administered baptism together with other sacraments, in other Christian churches, the recognition of the hierarchy of many of these churches, etc. When the Orthodox

Church considers the faithful of other churches as true Christians, that is as belonging to Christ (Gal. iii. 27), recognizes in them the grace of the Holy Spirit, and in many of them recognizes their clergy as well, the three basic elements of principal adherence to the one Christian Church are present. The question of in how far (and which of) these Christians may present deficiencies or obstacles in the attainment of salvation, is a secondary and not a primary one.

This broad-minded attitude and practice of the Orthodox Church explains its mild attitude toward other churches and their members. Comments to the contrary by Harnack or Kattenbusch are based on misunderstanding and the confusion of national squabbles with religious ecclesiastical viewpoints. On the contrary, authorities like Loofs and Beth note such evidences of tolerance as : the recognition of mixed marriages ; no proselytizing propaganda among the believers of other Christian churches ; Church prayers and memorial services for deceased non-orthodox Christians. (Prayers were said in many orthodox churches for the repose of the soul of the late Cardinal Mercier. —Translator's note.)

(b) The Church possesses the second of its fundamental qualities, holiness, because Christ—its Head—is holy, and because the Holy Spirit working in it through the means of grace is holy ; because it has produced saints (holy

ones) who have been and have always remained its members; and because it is the Church's aim to make all its members holy. The question whether the Church does not lose its holiness by having sinners in its midst and as its members, is answered in the spirit of the ancient Church, based on the two main principles of God's boundless mercy and His love to the Church.

(c) The Church is "Catholic" because it embraces all in all, without limitation of time and space. Because it is the one Church, it is Catholic not only in the sense of general and œcumenical, that is to say extending over the whole earth, over all ethnographical and geographical boundaries, but also in the sense of all-embracing: earthly and supra-mundane. It is Catholic in this sense of unfathomable continuity and in the sense of inner unity and fullness, the comprehension and penetration of the whole of life.

The Orthodox Church considers itself and often calls itself "Catholic," or "Orthodox-Catholic." In the West the circumstance is not always noted that the Roman Church rarely calls itself "the Catholic Church," but rather usually "the Roman Church," or "the Roman-Catholic Church." Two considerations are sometimes raised against the catholicity of the Orthodox Church: first, that in reality it is divided into national churches, closely bound up with the nationality of their members;

secondly, that it has not supported external missions for the extension of Christianity throughout the world. These two considerations are misunderstood because they are placed in the wrong light, and hence incorrect or exaggerated conclusions have been drawn from them. These two points will be dealt with later. Even the fact that there are many autocephalic churches in the Orthodox Church cannot be pointed to as a lack of catholicity; the Catholic Church of antiquity was really more a federation of the churches, and so here the Orthodox Church is doing nothing other than maintaining in life and practice the ancient principle.

(d) Lastly, the Church is Apostolic, because it bases its whole life upon the apostles. Two considerations are especially emphasized by the Orthodox Church: (1) that in its source, in its doctrine and its creed, it has remained faithful to the apostolic doctrine and formula, and intends to remain so faithful; and (2) that it has maintained continuity with the apostles, their times and their spirit, through the apostolic succession.

7

It is natural that a Church like the Orthodox, which ascribes great importance to the human and external side of Church life, should have a definite organization, with authority and order. On the other hand, since it stresses not less

the Divine and the inner-invisible aspect of the Church, it is again natural that this Church's organization and authority should be other than wordly and formally juridical, having rather a preponderantly spiritual and mystic character.

The highest authority of the Orthodox Church is the Church itself, the whole community of the Church. In the organization of the Church's service the clergy (the hierarchy) has a preferred place, and within the hierarchy, the episcopal office. The liturgical service belongs among the special duties of the hierarchy.

The last two sentences express the essentials of both authority and organization of the Orthodox Church. The Church regards these two theses as apostolic and primitively Christian, and therefore holds to them firmly.

The hierarchy is, of course, the *præcipium membrum ecclesiæ*, since the clergy are the servants of God in the most holy things, and shepherds of the souls of the faithful. For these purposes they are chosen and consecrated. Still, this service in no wise lifts them to a higher order, in which they are changed to another kind of person, or into other kinds of beings, who stand between the world of God and the world of man. It is true that this quite inaccurate opinion as to a change in nature of the clergy of the Orthodox Church has been expressed in otherwise reliable theological circles of the West. Kattenbusch is

an instance of this, but Beth takes issue with him and demonstrates the untenability of his conception of the supposed metaphysic-mystic change in the person of the priest. It is clear that expressions of Chrysostom concerning the ideal holiness of the hierarchy (in his chapters "On the Priesthood") have a purely ethical meaning, and that he is speaking only of what should be, and not what is. It is further clear that all the orientally exaggerated expressions sometimes used of the clergy, such as "holiness" and the like, have never been understood in the literal sense. The priests have never been themselves an object of faith in the Orthodox Church. Rather it must be emphasized that in all cases, even in the mystic parts of the service, it is always made clear that the priests are only servants, unworthy and sinful, among the most sinful of God's servants. They are not the "proprietors" of the gifts of grace, as Kattenbusch thinks. It is true that they perform the liturgy and direct the sacraments, but all this only as instruments of God. Thus it is not the priests who administer the grace of God to the faithful, but God Himself.

It is characteristic for our question and for the whole essence of the Orthodox Church, that in administration of the sacraments, action on the part of the priest is conceived objectively. In the Orthodox Church the priest does not say the words of consecration in the active

form, as is the case in the Roman Catholic Church, but in the passive. Instead of saying "I baptize," "I confirm," etc., he says "The servant of God, N., is baptized, is wedded." Here the priest retires, and the believer finds himself face to face with God. In the liturgy also, the priest, almost without exception, speaks the prayers, not in his own name, but as the representative of the faithful, in company with them ("We, O God," etc.) as though the whole congregation, the whole Church, were speaking to God. This point is made especially clear in the Eucharist: in the Roman Catholic Church at the consecration of the elements it is the priest who "*Corpus Christi conficit*"; in the Orthodox Church, on the other hand, the priest in this moment withdraws behind the activity of the Holy Spirit Itself.

8

The Orthodox Church is a hierarchical, but in no wise a hierocratic Church, at least not in the sense in which this word is commonly understood in the West.

Let us first consider the episcopal office. The clergy are the preferred in the service of the Church: among the clergy the bishops are the preferred. Among themselves the bishops are absolutely equal, in all essential functions of their office. At the head of the spiritual direction of a diocese is a diocesan bishop, and

at the head of the spiritual liturgical direction of the Church, the national Church or the Church as a whole, there is the assembly of all bishops or representatives elected by them. The first among them (archbishop, metropolitan or patriarch) is only *primus inter pares*. The Orthodox Church has always been a classic Church of synodalism.

It is usually believed in the West, and not rarely in the East as well, that this episcopal synodalism is the highest principle of the Orthodox Church. Is this true? In principle, never; *in concreto* it has not been the case for a long time. The bishops are set over the priests (pastors) in liturgical and disciplinary matters, but in no autocratic sense of that word. Continuing the practice of the early Church, the co-operation of the whole Presbyterium, at whose head was the bishop, and whose members were the presbyters, this principle has been confirmed and enlarged, especially since the middle of the nineteenth century. To-day in almost all orthodox churches the bishop is bound to co-operation with, and the agreement of, the priesthood in all important matters of diocesan government. This agreement is given through the consistory, made up of priests elected by the clergy of the diocese. In line with this, the priesthood is represented as well, in the higher government of the various churches, *i.e.* in the Supreme Church Councils and in Ecclesiastical Supreme Courts.

This is the case in the eastern patriarchates, in Russia, Rumania, Serbia, and Bulgaria, as well as in the smaller churches of the North-East.

But apart from this formal and legal aspect, the orthodox priesthood, considered empirically, is really the central point of Church life, and the connection between bishop and people. We have had times in the Eastern Church when the bishops stood aloof from both people and priesthood; but the priest has always remained near the people, closely associated with the faithful of the Church in joy and in sorrow, often in the same material, or even spiritual, poverty. The priests are not cut off from the intimate life of the people. They marry and they wish to be married; they participate in all the important events of popular life. This cordial community of priest with people, as it has come over to us from the past, is the best foundation for a prosperous religious and ecclesiastical development in the Orthodox Church of the future.

But the so-called laity are in no wise a passive element in the Orthodox Church. On the contrary, the broad masses of the Church people form a truly living part of the ecclesiastical body, perhaps the real body of the Church. The faithful participate as an active force in all phases of Church life; through the Parish Council they direct all the not purely spiritual or liturgical affairs of the parish; in

almost all orthodox churches the laity elect the holders of the offices, from the priest up to the patriarch. In various forms they participate in the supreme governing bodies, both of dioceses and of the whole Church. They are represented in the Supreme Councils of different orthodox churches as well, where in most cases they form the majority. (This is the case in the Russian "sobor."—Translator's note.) In most of these councils the greater part of the Church's affairs are decided by a simple majority; in important spiritual questions, as for example those of dogma, unanimity between bishops and lay members is required. Even in liturgical service the laity is not so completely separate. One may often observe in the Orthodox Church that not only brief talks, but sermons as well are given by laymen, of course with the permission of the Church officials. The great importance of laymen in the ecclesiastical religious life of the orthodox East may be seen from the fact that most of the theologians and the best of them, notably in Russia, have been laymen, and that in Russia, for example, Homyakov, a layman, is regarded, even by the highest circles of the hierarchy, as the best orthodox theologian and the greatest authority on orthodox Christianity.

After all this we state the question again, what is really the highest authority in the Orthodox Church? And the answer must be the same: the whole Church, the whole com-

munity of the Church. Not the bishops alone, even though they have a preferred position in the Church ; not the clergy in general, although it is an elected part of the Church ; neither the laity alone. None of these groups represents the Church ; they are all only parts of it. And no part in the Church can represent the whole, particularly in the most important functions of its life. This is particularly true, since all the individual faithful are living members of the body of Christ, who can never be represented or presented by any part or any member, no matter how preferred. From this ancient and genuinely orthodox (and Christian) conception, such expressions as the following take their true meaning: "The real guardian of piety" (of faith in the Orthodox Church) "is the body of the Church, that is the people itself," as the eastern patriarchs expressed it in their answer in 1848 to the Encyclical of Pope Pius IX. Or as Homyakov puts it beautifully: "The unshakable firmness, the unchangeable truth of Christian dogma is not dependent on the order of the hierarchy ; it remains preserved in its fullness in the communality (the 'belonging-together') of the Church people, which is the Church, which forms the body of Christ. Neither the hierarchical power nor the importance of the clerical station can be recognized as guaranty for the truth. The knowledge of the truth is given only to mutual love. The recognition of the truth is strictly separate

from the hierarchical obligations, that is from the control of the sacraments and the maintenance of Church discipline. The gift of unchangeable recognition (of the truth), which is nothing other than faith itself, is not ascribed to separate persons, but to the sum of the body of the Church, and is intimately bound up with the ethical principle of mutual love." "The Church gives the bishops the honour and the right to announce its (the Church's) dogmatic decisions; but it retains for itself the right to judge if its faith and its tradition are rightly observed. So many councils in the Orthodox Church have been repudiated, which externally were not different from Œcumenical Councils. Why? Only because their decisions were not recognized as the voice of the Church by the whole Church people, by this people and in this *milieu* where in questions of faith there is no difference between learned and unlearned, between clergy and lay, man and woman, ruler and subject, master and slave; where, if in the providence of God it is necessary, children receive the gift of vision, the word of wisdom is given to a youth, the heresy of a learned bishop is repudiated by a simple pastor—in order that all shall be one in the free unity of living faith, which is a manifestation of the Spirit of God."

Florensky expresses the same idea as follows: "We are not in a position to indicate any churchly office of which we could say that it unites in itself the whole of the

Church; for then, what purpose would the other offices and functions of the Church serve?" In the Orthodox Church there can be no external authority of dogmatic infallibility—there should be none. Homyakov successfully refuted the Roman Catholic solution of the question which had forced its way into the views of the Eastern Church, and thereby he wrote his name ineffaceably in the history of orthodox theology as apostle of the idea of freedom in Orthodoxy. The Church has always been a "pleroma," a fullness (completion), because it contains the fullness in itself and is moved by the Holy Spirit. On this account the truth of its dogmas is dependent on the fullness of Church life. Where is this Church of the completion? It exists in the fact that the Church is conceived as including every one. This is why Orthodoxy knows no absolute organ, nothing of external authority and a *pars pro toto*. Rather, it knows only a *pars in toto*. Sergius Bulgakov, the famous Russian national economist, who is now an orthodox priest and theologian, recently expressed the same idea: "The significance of the Œcumenical Council does not consist in the possession of an infallible authority in matters of faith (such an authority it does not possess), but rather in that it is a means of arousing and expressing the Church consciousness." A whole series of orthodox theologians and thinkers, especially among the Russians, is busied at

present with further, thorough study of this principle of the Orthodox Church. I must admit that this most important doctrine of orthodox Christianity has not always been especially emphasized by some of our bishops. But this changes nothing of the importance of the principle, and there can be no doubt that even the bishops, sooner or later, will bear witness and give definite expression to what the whole Orthodox Church feels and proves.

This explains why clericalism has never been able to put itself in power in the Orthodox Church, and why, with all the individualism of the different peoples involved, the principle of community and of love has been maintained so firmly and consequently in the whole orthodox world. The principles of external organization are to be understood solely as a radiation from this basic principle of the Orthodox Church.

9

As we have seen, the orthodox churches are synodically organized and governed, building this government on the separate parishes. Among themselves the different orthodox churches are more or less federatively allied.

The external form upon which the whole constitution of government is based, both within a given church and for the churches among themselves, is the Synod or Church Assembly. This institution is fundamental, in all degrees

of Church government, from the Parish Councils to the highest Synods. There may even be a Supreme Council of a given Orthodox Church or an Œcumenical Council of all the orthodox churches together.

This system of councils has its source in the orthodox East, and it is chiefly in the East that the idea of councils as the expression of the community in the external and ordered activity of the Church has, in spite of many variations conditioned by historical changes, maintained its creative and constructive power up to the present time.

In their relations one to another, the separate orthodox churches are quite independent or autocephalic, of course within the limits of the general doctrines, legal order, and cult-forms of the Orthodox Church. This means that the ecclesiastical leadership of a given Orthodox Church has no authority over the affairs of another Orthodox Church, nor can it have any. In what, then, consists the constitution which binds these separate churches into a unity, the *one* Orthodox Church? First of all it consists in the fact that all belong together, inwardly and spiritually, in *one* faith, in the same principles of order and the same cult. To this must be added the consciousness of a common historic past, and then the same religious-ecclesiastical mentality of all orthodox eastern peoples, as well as the same direction for their religious and Christian tendencies. As far as

the first is concerned, the inward sense of unity in the orthodox churches, it may seem that this invisible spiritual bond has not always been strong enough or always permanently effective. Still both the long past and the present bear witness to the unity of the orthodox churches, preserved in spite of the many dangers and tribulations through which they have had to pass.

From a formal and juridical standpoint this question of the unity of the orthodox churches offers considerable difficulty. The general Church law principle reads: In comprehensive matters concerning the Church (the Church as a whole or all the separate churches), the general or œcumenical council is decisive. But for almost twelve centuries the Orthodox Church has had no such council, and the efforts of recent times to convene such an assembly have shown very clearly how difficult this question has become in the course of the years. In the first Christian centuries it was easy, or at least easier, to bring such a council into being, since the one Christian State of those times, the Roman, or later the Byzantine State, supported the council. This unity in one State has disappeared; various orthodox States have arisen, partially differentiated as to nationality. Beside this, considerable portions of orthodox Christianity are under the political rule of non-Orthodox or non-Christian governments, as for example Turkey, Egypt, Palestine,

and Syria, or present-day Russia. Thus the problem has reached a climax of difficulty. This difficulty is all the more keenly felt to-day, because in practically the whole Orthodox Church the opinion is growing that the revision and reform of many things (those of dogmatic character excluded) by a General Council is immediately necessary. Such solutions as have been proposed up to now are of little use, especially since in the course of time old misunderstandings and new mistaken opinions about the solution of this problem have increased the difficulties.

In the West, especially, one often meets the conception that the Œcumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople represents the constitutional unity of the orthodox churches. Others seem to think that there is no such constitutional unity. According to the law, or, as we say, according to the canon, however, the Patriarchate of Constantinople has never been the head of the Orthodox Church, or in any wise recognized as such, canonically. During the prosperity of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople was actually often the dominating church, but its position was always conditioned by historical fact and had very relative significance. At present there can be no thought whatever of such a preferred position for this patriarchate. Even the Greeks repudiate this idea decisively. The churches have often helped themselves, or tried to help themselves, by an exchange of

opinions among the various churches, but even this method has its special difficulties and can in no case equal the significance of an Œcumenical Council. Thus the problem of the constitutional and legal unity of the orthodox churches of the present day remains an open one. But this difficult question will certainly be solved in the course of time, and certainly on the basis of the chief principles of orthodox Christianity.

It is quite true, as someone has said, that the Orthodox Church "has never been able to create a papacy." Speaking in the spirit of my Church, I should like to add, thankfully, that orthodox Christianity never will be able to set up a papacy. It is not capable of this in any sense: to do so would be to cease to be Orthodox.

Orthodox Christianity certainly sets great value on the idea of authority, but none the less does it prize the principle of freedom. The whole essence of its being, from the first until now, has been the synthesis, the inward union, of these two basic principles of authority and freedom. This synthesis expresses quite perfectly the essence of the Orthodox Church. The synodal-communal constitution of the Church is an expression and an incarnation of this synthesis. I am convinced that in the future as well, the Orthodox Church, true to its history and itself, will continue to be a bearer of the great idea of Christian community

in truth and authority, in freedom and love. Thus the Orthodox Church avoids, and will continue to avoid, the danger both of hierocratic absolutism and of ecclesiastical nihilism, or atomism.

In these basic conceptions of the essence of the church, the Orthodox Church believes that it can best attain its calling and its mission, its highest purpose: the unity and the completion of faith and love in the God-man and among the members of the church themselves. It is one of the climaxes of the celebration of the Eucharist, and at the same time a supremely suitable expression of the Orthodox Church itself, when in the worshipping congregation the words resound: "Let us love one another, that with one accord we may confess the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

CHAPTER IV

THE CULT¹

"Come, Lord Jesus!" (REV. xxii. 20).

"Maranatha!" (1 COR. xvi. 22).

I

THE Church and the cult are inseparably joined. Quite naturally and fundamentally, the character and purpose of the cult arise from the essence and mission of the Church.

On the basis of this general thesis and in view of previous remarks about the Church, the following general proposition may be made: Just as the Church is the mystical union between Christ and those who love Him, so the cult is the expression of the mystical connection between God and men, the mystical communion in mutual giving and self-surrender between God and the faithful in the Church.

This special significance of the cult, a characteristic trait of Orthodoxy, makes it evident that orthodox Christianity is quite as much a matter of cult as it is of church organization. This explains why in the West it is almost

¹ See footnote on p. 44.

unanimously believed that the Orthodox Church is essentially, or even exclusively, a communion of sacraments and cult; that the cult forms "the basic character of its piety." To this remark by Kattenbusch, many scholars add that the Orthodox cult has decayed into a kind of material, magic sacramentalism, overburdened with superstitious and even pagan ceremonies, and that this is undoubtedly an inferior conception of Christianity. I think that this last verdict can be immediately set aside by the fact that such critics do not know the Orthodox cult from within, from the soul, but only from without, and that the poetic in the Orthodox cult is therefore often too realistically apprehended, the symbolic is not understood in its true allegorical sense.

At all events, orthodox Christianity is thoroughly, primitively Christian in its cult as in other things. The liturgy, which is quite the central point of Orthodox Church services, dates almost from the very dawn of Christianity. The two liturgies which are in use to-day, that of St John Chrysostom (died 407) and Basil the Great (died 379), date from the fourth century.

2

What, in reality, is the significance of the Orthodox cult in the religious life of the Church?

First, the whole service of the Orthodox Church, especially for the broader masses of

the faithful, is a plastic representation of Christian doctrine: in the cult, so to speak, the faithful see and experience their faith or the faith of the Church. Schleiermacher's remark about cult, that it is "representative action," is especially true of Orthodoxy. It is not true that the cult of our Church is its dogma; it is better to say that the Church's dogma finds expression through the cult. And this expression is so full of inner force and dynamic effect that it, in its turn, awakes the deepest feelings and the strongest emotions of the Christian soul. Through it the splendour of eternity breaks into the reality of to-day and bears the faithful with it aloft into the sphere of the invisible and eternal.

The sermon forms a part of this cult, and the effect of the orthodox service on the faithful is due in considerable measure to the sermon. It is not at all true, as is sometimes stated in the West, that the Orthodox Church service is sermonless, and that in an orthodox church one looks in vain for a pulpit, since the absence of a sermon makes such an institution unnecessary. No, just as the Orthodox Church of the past ages had its great and gifted preachers, whose names are among the dearest in the history of all Christendom, so to-day it cultivates preaching. It is true that in certain periods, especially those of the greatest external difficulties, the sermon was somewhat neglected. Nowadays, on the other hand, it may be observed in all

orthodox churches that the sermon has its proper place in the service.

In the Orthodox cult, however, not the sermon is the central point of the Eucharistic Sacrament or of the service as a whole, but rather the service at the altar. This is true since what is really decisive for us is not the action of men, but that of God Himself; because the final purpose of all cult must be not moral influence and training, but mystical union with God. The Orthodox draw a sharp line between the service of "the Word" and the service through human words, and proceed further to the position that within a given service by the word of man, the sermon is only one of the possible forms of presentation, and not always the most suitable form. This explains why any conception of the sermon as a "Sacrament of the Word" is utterly foreign to the Orthodox Church. By this distinction and emphasis Orthodoxy does not mean to crowd the sermon out of its proper and important place. On the contrary, to expect it to be an essential part of the service is to demand very, very much from the sermon; for the service is itself one great preachment of the Word of God. The sermon should form a part of this Divine service: it must not be only religious instruction or a mere lecture. During Divine service in the church the Word of God is read for the spiritual upbuilding of the faithful. Hence the sermon should

not be so much a doctrinal exposition of the Scriptures as edification for those who hear it. I believe the Orthodox Church avoids both extremes: that Divine service should be mechanized by the absence or the repression of the sermon, a danger which must be avoided at all costs; or the other danger, that the service should be rationalized, doctrinized, and thus profaned. This danger would certainly arise whenever the sermon became the centre of Divine service, or took upon itself the nature of a lecture which served only for the instruction of the faithful. Both of these extremes would be absolutely opposed to the pneumatic-mystic character, both of the Orthodox Church and that of its cult.

A very suitable form, both of Christian teaching and of spiritual edification, is that provided by the icons and especially the pictures and frescoes in the Orthodox Church. They serve as "the Bible of the unlearned," as inspiring reminders of the virtues of the saints. As Gass says, "The walls of an orthodox church are like an open book, whose vivid pages tell of holy persons and events. They make a strongly ethical impression, since they continually remind one of the love and mercy of God, of the strength of faith, the piety and the mighty deeds of great heroes of the faith."

The chief significance of the Orthodox cult consists in this, that it gives expression to the mystical-real community of the Church.

This expression is often so complete that the cult itself becomes this communion. As Arsenyev says, "The Orthodox Church does not concentrate its attention merely upon God and the separate individual souls. Those separate souls and their relation to God are the most precious, yes the true holy of holies of religion. But the orthodox service is not merely a conversation between two; rather it is a powerful combination of many tones, it is a great organism, a mighty kingdom, a comprehensive brotherhood, a Church of God, in which the individual is received as one member of many members, and this Church extends itself and grows into the illimitable."

The Orthodox cult is a community of prayer, of faith, of love and mercy.

It is a community of prayer, because here all pray, all together, and each for the rest. It is a community in faith, because we never feel so clearly and deeply our community in faith as in the cult. Faith unites individuals into one believing soul, and in the most solemn mystical moments of the Orthodox cult the faith of all becomes a deep, common experience. The cult is, further, a community in love, because in the mystery of the Eucharist, Christ, who is love, comes to His own and unites Himself with them in this love. It is a community in love, because only when they are united together in love can the faithful receive the love of God. The Orthodox cult is, finally, a community in mercy,

because through the mysteries (sacraments) of the cult, and especially through the mystery of the altar, all Christians become participators in the Grace of God, because all the faithful are graciously elevated to God and God descends to men: a mystical interpenetration of God and His flock takes place. Thus the Orthodox cult as demonstrated by the faith and experience of the Church, is a representation of the Divine, the action of God among His faithful, in that He comes down to them and unites Himself with them, and at the same time an elevation of the community in all its members to an inner union with the God-man Christ. The cult is thus two things: the action of God and the reaction of men. So we see that in the Orthodox cult, if it is considered from its deepest foundations, the moving and governing element is the idea of the Incarnation of Christ together with that of the deification of men in Christ.

3

The purpose of orthodox services is truly that of religious education and instruction, of moral influence. But these are not the final purpose. From what has been said above, it is clear that while the orthodox service includes all this, it is careful not to omit the aspect of moral instruction; still, its true essential purpose is to unite the faithful with the supernatural world, with God. Hence the soul of orthodox

Divine service is not so fully represented in the practical service of Martha as it is in the devoted, listening, contemplative soul of Mary. Nevertheless, this significance and this purpose of orthodox service offer the most effective impulses for the practical realization of Christian life as a service of God.

4

The basic elements of the Orthodox, as of every Christian cult, are prayer and the Word of God. Orthodoxy is distinct from other confessions in the form and manner in which prayer and the Word of God are presented.

The prayers are especially noteworthy for their depth, their warmth and power. Even western scholars who are critically inclined toward Orthodoxy, acknowledge that many of these prayers possess great beauty of form; that they have a particularly moving pathos; that they truly ennoble devotion through the fineness and purity of their feeling. They are now an "inward doing," an ever increasing, unceasing cry to God; now they bear a truly lyrical stamp, the deepest heart tones, of tender and glowing accumulation of feeling, of unconditional, humble surrender to the love and the will of God.

The Scriptures are widely used in the Orthodox cult. This both arises from, and gives expression to, the great respect for the Bible and the undeniably strong faith in it,

so characteristic of the Orthodox Church. The Bible is usually read in the language of the country, sometimes in an older form of a given language as in the use of New Testament Greek by the Greeks and the Church-Slavonic by the Russians and Serbs, or in the modern tongue, as in Rumania, and to a certain extent in Bulgaria. There is no obstacle in the Orthodox Church to the use of the vernacular as the language of the cult. And if some churches still continue to use older forms of the literary language instead of the common tongue, this is usually because the latter is still in the process of development.

A third and very powerful element used by the Orthodox Church for its cult, is art. The Orthodox cult itself, in its most important parts, is figurative, and art is one of the most suitable means for transmitting externally an inward spirituality: to awaken, to nourish and strengthen religious feeling. It lay in the blood of the Greeks to use art as the most noble expression of the religious, to consider and respect pure art as revelation and inspiration of the Divine, of the true and the good. The orthodox Slavs, who even to-day call the good "beautiful," have taken over this inheritance. Orientals are also noted for their lively fantasy and rich appreciation of the poetic. Finally, the man of the East, especially the Greek, is just as strongly inclined toward religious contemplation as toward active practice.

All these considerations explain not only the fact that art has such great significance for the Orthodox cult, but also the form in which art is employed. On the one hand, art must help to afford a plastic expression of the transcendental, the spiritual-mystical, the ideal. But at the same time it must assist in preserving the inward and super-empirical nature of religious content. Thus in art the ideal is closely bound up with the symbolic and visible: both really belong together. This is why the Orthodox cult is especially distinctive in a large content of richly-developed symbols, for it is just in the symbol that the supra-real comes to expression and attains symbolic reality in orthodox services.

Orthodox Christianity employs in its cult all the various forms of art with the exception of sculpture. Poetry appears chiefly in the church hymns. In these hymns "the power and energy of thought is united with the harmony and sound of the word, with the variability and beauty of expression." Many have even considered the whole Orthodox cult to be "a free poesy of words and symbols."

Orthodoxy has developed a special symbolism in its vocal music. Instrumental music is not used; orchestral music certainly not, since it is too realistic for the spiritual nature of the Orthodox cult, and because only in church singing can the text be emphasized and understood and have its full effect. The church music of Orthodoxy, especially of the Russians, is quite

generally known and recognized in the West as "meaningful and beautiful." It goes straight to the heart with its deep tenderness of expression and feeling. The choir is here so developed as to deserve to be a model for the highest forms of church music.

Church painting, with its great warmth and deeply symbolic sense, plays its part in the full expression of the Orthodox cult. The church pictures, icons and murals, are more than mere decorations of the church; they are an open picture-Bible and Church history, written with the painter's brush. They arouse and maintain the religious mood, which is the foundation of the sublimest moments of Divine service. Eastern iconography has never excelled in beauty of form, in exact anatomy, fullness of colour, wonderful line, the play of light or perspective. In all these western, Roman Catholic, painting far excels that of Orthodoxy. Orthodox Church painting lays far greater emphasis on the expression of the spirit, on holiness. Orthodox folk admire and enjoy western, Catholic, religious pictures, but they find in them more the sweetness of beautiful persons, who still belong completely to earth, rather than those transfigured in spirit and ennobled above this world. The famous Russian thinker, A. L. Volynsky, writes as follows about Orthodox Church painting: "Any 'odigitrie' (the Madonna of Guidance), in spite of all its artistic imperfections, contains, if one may so express it, a certain moving

inspiration. In it the Virgin moves steadily, but with the greatest spiritual self-control ; she concentrates her thought not on the Child Himself, but on His significance for the world. Or a praying Madonna : a woman who, with hands raised to Heaven, is a personification of the whole world. She is represented without the Child in an ecstasy of prayer, in Her appeal to Divinity for all of humanity. This is a boundlessly deep symbol, a truly illuminating conception. The metaphysical principle of eastern painting is the representation of the world in its ideal prototypes, the consideration of the world in the light of its Divine essentials. Byzantine iconography excels realistic painting : it creates poetic symbolizations. It is filled with the rapture and premonitions of prophecy, with the symbolic and the imaginative power of the Apocalypse."

The Orthodox cult has no statues, probably because painting is more poetic and spiritual than plastic, because plastic is more sensual, more limited, colder and less suitable for symbolizing the mystical and supernatural. Another reason for the absence of sculpture is doubtless the desire to avoid the danger of the heathen religious influences of ancient art, in which polytheism was especially expressed by statues.

The typically symbolic in the architecture of church buildings is expressed in the cross-form and the dome, which is supposed to represent Heaven.

5

The church building, its pictures, the whole ritual of service, the music and the rest, form a unique medium for that which takes place in the cult. At the heart of this are the "mysteries," of which the most central is the mystery of the Eucharist. I use the word "mystery," because this word gives more nearly the sense and attitude of the Church. In all languages of the Orthodox Church the word "mystery" is used. The mysteries are truly the pulse-beat of the cult and piety of the Orthodox Church. Their general meaning is the penetration of all creation by the Spirit of God. For the faithful themselves they are not merely signs or signals by which the activity of the Holy Spirit may be recognized, but rather the external means for the unfathomably mysterious action of the Grace of the Holy Spirit, by which the salvation of men is consummated. The mysteries are both symbols and realities; symbols in their externals, realities in the mystical activity of the Grace of God.

The Orthodox Church naturally has its doctrine as to the conditions necessary for the validity of the mysteries, but I do not consider it necessary to go deeply into this. Let me mention only that this doctrine gives special consideration to the objective aspect and effect of the mysteries. This, to be sure, is not

dependent on the receiver, but certainly the kind of effect is : whether unto salvation or, as the old formula reads, "unto burning, unto judgment and condemnation." The Church demands not a passive attitude, but a free, inward, active acceptance of grace and the reception of salvation. And as a subjective condition for the salvatory effect of the mystery, the Church demands a confident faith and an inward longing for the help of Divine Grace.

6

In the Orthodox Church to-day the seven mysteries or sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church are generally accepted. It is self-evident that in the orthodox churches as in the others, baptism is the first mystery in which man is purified of his sins and becomes a member of the Church of Christ. In the lives of orthodox Christians, baptism is more ceremonious and more joyful than in the West. The mystery of the Last Supper, most holy of the seven, is specially expressed in the liturgy of the Church. The liturgy is foundation and centre of the whole orthodox service. It is no mere ornament or something purely external. Christology and soteriology are mystically bound together in the liturgy. Here are both teaching and experience, symbol and reality, History (the Incarnation) and the Present (the new appearance) ; here are both God and man,

united. The liturgy is the symbolic representation and contemplation of the life of Christ and the holy drama of the sacrifice on Golgotha. But at the same time it is the most sublime mystery of the ever-new return of Christ to His own, and of the truest and deepest union with Him. In the liturgy we see, most clearly and movingly, the realism of the symbolism and the symbolism of the realism of Orthodoxy, the mystical-symbolic interpenetration of Heaven and earth, of God and man, of Christ and the Church. Here again the basic idea is God's becoming man and men becoming Divine. In this mystery the Orthodox Church sees its most perfect union, yes, communion of faith and love and hope—the content of its whole life. The key-note of this mystery is the basic mood of the early Church: "Yea come, Lord Jesus! Maranatha!"—"Yea come, and give us Thy fullness and Thy Self!"

In the Orthodox Church the Eucharist is considered as a bloodless sacrifice: a sacrifice of praise, of thanks, of petition and reconciliation. The idea of the Eucharist as a sacrifice is, of course, primitively Christian, and thus it is conceived in Orthodoxy. Only we have no generally binding (œcumenically fixed) doctrine concerning the details of this idea, especially as to the real nature of the eucharistic sacrifice. To such questions as the following, the most various answers are given: *What* is offered in the Eucharist, the gifts of Christians (the

elements) or Christ Himself? *Who* sacrifices, Christ (sacrificing Himself) or the priest, or the Church or the Communion, the body of the faithful? Or *to whom* is it offered, to God the Father or to the God-man Christ? Rauschen's opinion, that the early Fathers understand the offering of the body and blood of Christ chiefly in the symbolic sense, is perhaps the western conception nearest to orthodox theological thought. In spite of earlier doctrine, Wieland's investigation led him to this conclusion: "We do not offer to God the body and blood of Christ"; rather, "We truly and really show forth the death of Christ, not in the sense of a repetition, but only in a new form." Most orthodox theologians have not expressed themselves precisely on this question. Yet the basic idea of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist is everywhere maintained.

Greater clarity and unanimity is to be noted in the answers given to the question: For whom and for what purpose is the Eucharist offered and celebrated? It is celebrated as a memorial of Christ and His work of salvation. It is celebrated for the whole Church, the earthly and the heavenly, for the living and the dead, for all Christians, for every one. The Eucharist is offered and celebrated for the attainment of boundless faith and unfeigned love, of mercy and grace, for the salvation and peace of all Christendom, of the whole world. Still, the climax of the celebration is communion with

the consecrated elements, the union with the Saviour Himself. Here is the mystic and true communion with Christ who has come to be present among His own. Here is the life of Christ in men and the life of men in Christ. Here is that heavenly-earthly unity in which the Spirit of God is, and in which we have the unshakable earnest of sinlessness, immortality, holiness, and eternal life: God Himself. Here vibrates the deepest of our faith, the most active of our hopes and the warmest of our love.

Now a few words on the orthodox doctrine of transubstantiation. The proposition is accepted without doubt in the Orthodox Church that Christ is present in the consecrated elements, and that at the consecration "a change" takes place, or better, as the early Fathers of the Eastern Church teach, that the consecrated elements are the true body and the true blood of Christ. But only so far. There is no œcumenically defined and binding statement as *how* this takes place. Whatever has been said about it is not dogma, but only opinion. During the last two centuries the doctrine of transubstantiation found certain adherents among the Orthodox, but orthodox theological statements on this question within the past two decades have made it clear that this doctrine has never been a dogma of the Orthodox Church. In any case, the raw materialistic form of this doctrine is unanimously repudiated

by all orthodox theologians. Thus it will be evident on the one hand, that we have remained true to the ancient teaching of the Church, and on the other, that we conceive pneumatically this greatest mystery of Christianity.

In the orthodox East of to-day confession is closely connected with the Eucharist. The average Christian takes communion several times, or at least once, a year. He should confess just as often. As a matter of fact, particularly in the orthodox South-East, confession is very rare. Since confession, as the Church conceives it, is penitence, an introspection, retirement within oneself, a struggle of the heart against sin, an overwhelming acknowledgment in God's presence of sins committed and a courageous decision for improvement, and since this penitence is followed by the forgiveness of sins before God in the sacrament of confession, much effort has been put forth in the Church in recent times to have confession always connected with the communion. The process of this sacrament is as follows: sincere regret for sin, connected with faith in Christ and hope in His mercy; acknowledgment of sin; if necessary, on the advice of the confessor, a penance consisting chiefly in prayer, fasting, and deeds of self-sacrifice (these last are merely indications of inner preparation, and have no such significance of dessert as the Roman Catholic "satisfactiones"); then absolution (I have already noted that in this it is God Himself who

forgives sins, and not the priest). Confession is conceived as an aid to the maintenance of a sense of sin, as a training for spiritual self-discipline, as an encouragement for moral purification and good deeds. Efforts to bring confession into wider and more vital usage have been specially successful in the Russian Church. This conception of confession contains no thought of a censorship of the faithful.

The sacrament of the ordination of priests has great significance in a hierarchical Church like the Orthodox. But the sacrament of marriage has no less significance. The Divine consecration of wedlock by this mystery, as Paul called it (Eph. v. 23), lies deep in the soul and custom of the people. It binds together the holy and serious with the pure and joyful in Christian wedlock.

An important phase of the cult, and especially of the piety of orthodox people, consists in the veneration of the saints and prayers for the dead. It is in the East that Maryology has always been bound up with Christology, since orthodox Christianity emphasizes the human-divine nature of the Saviour in the veneration of the Virgin Mary. The veneration of the saints rests on the vivid idea of holiness, and the saints are actually examples of salvation. Closely connected with this adoration of the saints is the appeal to them as intercessors before God for the faithful. The cult of the saints brings Heaven much nearer to the be-

liever and makes the atmosphere of the Church warmer and more trustful.

How intimately at home believing orthodox people feel themselves in the church may be seen from the various services in memory of the dead. Those are prayers, special devotionals ("panichida"), masses for the dead and the charitable action connected with these. The Church proceeds from the basic idea that at death no man leaves the world to appear before the face of God free of sin, perfect, holy, so that he does not need the mercy and the Grace of God; we all, living and dead, are members of the one Church, bound together in Christ by one faith, by common love, as unworthy sons of the merciful God. It is therefore our duty in faith to ask God, each of us separately, and all together as one Church, to be merciful toward the sinful soul of our departed brother. The prayer of the whole Church is a power of love before the merciful God. These prayers for the dead make the idea of the unity of the earthly and heavenly Church warmer and more familiar to the ordinary man.

I may perhaps close this characterization of the Orthodox cult with the following comments: the Orthodox cult is nothing noisy; it loves the inner chamber, the Church, and avoids the street. It is a cult in which the Church truly feels itself to be an organic whole, an inner unity, a unity of its members among themselves and a unity with God, with the Saviour. It is a

cult which gives a balance between the earthly and the heavenly, between content and form ; it strives to avoid both soulless formalism and rationalistic doctrinairism on the one hand, and the unhemmed play of fantasy and uncontrolled sensuousness on the other. It is a synthetic-pneumatic cult, in which symbolic - mystical realism and realistic symbolism go hand in hand and form a divine-human unity.

CHAPTER V

PIETY AND ACTIVITY

"The demons also believe and shudder" (JAMES ii. 19).

"And if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing" (I COR. xiii. 2).

"Oh, proud man, humble thyself!—and love everything! The whole creation of God, everything and every one!"—

DOSTOYEVSKY.

I

WHAT is the devotional life of orthodox Christians? How do they show their faith?

Western investigators have given very different answers to these questions, answers sometimes almost contradictory. In general, these follow two main directions.

One may be expressed as follows: the orthodox Christian is filled with a deep pessimism, sometimes intensified to a longing for death. In so far as he is influenced by and lives according to his religion, he is sunk in melancholy. He expects nothing from time or from this earth. His virtues are therefore extremely passive virtues; all action is numbed. The orthodox Christian has completely lost his appreciation for moral questions. He has no ethical interest in the things of this world.

The Biblical ideas of love and service form no part of his idea of public life. He does not know what new men and a new humanity mean. Orthodox Christianity is a Christianity *déclassé*. Even the gentle voices of sympathy which one hears from orthodox Russians are not those of active love, but rather a sort of aversion to severe or energetic action of any kind. With the Orthodox, "to be a brother" means only to wear the same face. In general the orthodox character lacks a sense of the ideal. Thus religion does not need to have any determining influence upon moral life. Religion is a matter of pure theory and not of living. This is why works of philanthropy are completely lacking in Orthodoxy. In contrast to the joyous, optimistic, active western Christian (especially the Roman Catholic), the orthodox Christian is sorrowful, pessimistic, passive, without any conception of the ethical.

The other view of Orthodoxy prevalent among western authorities is quite different. According to their opinion it is a mistake to try to judge orthodox Christians and orthodox Christianity solely on the basis of certain phases of city life or certain quite primitive elements in popular piety. On this basis what sort of picture would one get of the piety of German Protestantism, for example, if it were judged by Friedrichstrasse in Berlin or certain rural districts of East Prussia or Thuringia? In reality the ethical religious traits in orthodox

Christianity are very significant and important. Even the sacraments in the Orthodox Church do not make unnecessary either morality or virtue. The mysteries neither offer a substitute for moral effort nor push it into the background; they merely prepare the Christian for moral action. Under the circumstances in which orthodox Christians have had to live for whole centuries, it is quite astonishing that they have been able to maintain their faith at all. "I should like to know," says the English Bishop of Cairo, Gwynne, after his long years in Egypt, "if we would ever have been able, as they have been, to preserve our faith through those long centuries of persecution?"

Where is the truth in this matter? I think we shall approach it by first determining the standpoint from which we wish to make our judgment. Perhaps it will then develop that the so-called dark sides of orthodox piety have as much to contribute to a proper understanding as have the bright sides. And perhaps we shall discover that verdicts hitherto expressed have mistakenly accepted as absolute much which was of passing and relative importance, or else that individual cases have been too hastily generalized,

Some scholars believe that the passive and pessimistic character of orthodox piety may be explained by the tropical climate of eastern orthodox countries. I consider this theory wrong, because the overwhelming

majority of orthodox Christians, the Russians, do not live in such a climate at all, and also because the Orthodox of South-Eastern Europe, Greeks, Serbs, and Bulgarians, who by the way do not live in the tropics either, cannot be called phlegmatic, even in matters of religion. Other scholars consider the piety of orthodox Christians a result of racial character. It will not be questioned that the spiritual structure of a race or a people makes an impression on the religious life, even of Christian nations. Yet this opinion is quite relative in our case, if only for the fact that orthodox Christianity embraces so many very different peoples, Greeks, Slavs, Rumanians, etc., while even among the Russians a great distinction must be made between Great and Little Russians. Still other scholars have attempted to explain the religious-ecclesiastical character of Orthodoxy on the basis of historical conditions. The correctness of this standpoint must also be recognized, while keeping in mind its relative importance, since the essence of orthodox piety cannot, of course, be completely explained in this manner. To avoid incorrect conclusions in such a judgment, the differences of different historical periods, the peculiarities of various classes, etc., must always be considered. One must also avoid drawing general conclusions through confusing different periods, peoples, and the like. This is especially true for the eastern orthodox peoples, with their confused

and many-sided history. Finally, permit me to make this comment, that when one speaks of the religious-ethical activity of Christian peoples and Christians, it is far better, even more Christian, to speak with the greatest humility and to judge with the greatest love. The World War revealed most terribly the level of Christianity on which the peoples and the churches of the whole world are really living. I believe that the questions stated above can be seen in a far more correct light if considered from this viewpoint.

2

The principal background for answering our questions is already evident in that which has been said about the essence of orthodox Christianity. It may be stated as follows: the orthodox Christian knows all too well that he lives here on earth, and that the salvation of his soul and his fate in eternity are wrought here; but he knows just as well that he neither is nor should be *of* this earth, that nothing earthly has eternal importance; that on this earth he should be only a pious pilgrim toward the eternal city. This does not mean at all that the orthodox Christian flees this world, or ignores it; he is in the world, but he evaluates it and judges it differently. I believe I am right in saying that in this phase of its piety orthodox Christianity has maintained the basic

mood of the earliest Christians more strongly and more vitally than any other Christian Church. This mood means that the Christian views the world from the standpoint of the supernal sphere of eternal spiritual values. That is why the present-day orthodox Christian is not so greatly attached to this world. But his attitude toward it is serious, very serious. And since he cannot find what he seeks and cannot fulfil what he should like to create, he oftentimes falls into quite contrary moods. It is very characteristic of most Orthodox, especially the Russians, that they face the things of this world with a very vacillating judgment, that they hold no absolute firm and fast attitude toward the world, and that they never give themselves up to the things of this world and never lose themselves completely in them. They are in the world, but not bound to it. It is further characteristic that the orthodox eastern Slavs, again especially the Russians, are radicals in their spiritual attitude toward the world. Hence they often deny most emphatically the cultural values of modern civilization. The greatest Russian poets and thinkers, such as Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Gogol, and Solovieff, thought of themselves as "wanderers" in the world, and such they really were. In the depths of his soul the orthodox Russian is not bound fast to this world's goods. The typical orthodox Christian feels that the seeds of all the flowers in the garden of the

human world come from Heaven, and that they can only prosper when they can stretch their stems directly to Heaven and from thence receive nourishment. Only from this perspective has earthly life a real value for the orthodox Christian; only so can he have joy in it. Proceeding from the standpoint of the eternity of God and His revelation in us, orthodox Christians wish neither to conquer the world nor to have it secularized by religion. Rather, they wish to penetrate the world and to heal it from within. Hence the Orthodox Church guards itself against being changed into a mere moral or disciplinary institution. The heart of the orthodox Christianity is not a utilitarian humanism; it is, rather, childlike surrender to God and His inspiration.

If we proceed from this principal standpoint, we obtain the following detailed picture of orthodox piety and its attitude toward the values of this world.

3

The churchly, or "inner" piety of orthodox Christians, is closely allied with the services in the church. This is another connection in which the Church has remained primitively Christian. Piety thus expresses itself in frequent and free church attendance: there is no compulsory attendance in Orthodoxy, and no punishment for neglecting it. It expresses

itself, again, in hearty participation in the service, in which the observer is deeply impressed by the oft-repeated sign of the cross, a continuous reminder of the crucified Christ; repeated kneeling, a sign of humble submission before God; the lighting of thin wax candles, for our people a much loved symbol of the eternal Light and the warmth of eternal love; kissing the icons as a sign of veneration and love for the saints. Here belong also the prayers and services for the dead already mentioned, again a usage of the earliest times, and the observance of fasts, once a matter of general discipline, but nowadays observed voluntarily and not altogether systematically, so that the remarks of Max of Saxony do not fit the case when he says that in the Orthodox Church fasting is the "pillar of religion."

4

Divine service itself and the Church observances connected with it, contain so many ideas and moral impulses, that by them alone the orthodox Christian receives the strongest incentive and the basic direction for moral and religious activity. It is here to be noted that the "Commandments" of the Orthodox Church concerning the religious-moral attitude of Christians are concentrated about the Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount, especially

the Beatitudes. This is true also of all the catechisms.

Piety here puts emphasis not so much upon the deed itself as upon the intention, upon the direction of the spirit or the will of the heart. Not the deed itself is valuable, but the intention from which the deed grows up as a fruit. This is not to say that orthodox Christianity does not value works: we have already learned the attitude of orthodox Christianity in the "faith and works" question. Orthodox Christianity takes works into consideration only as a fruit of faith or of Christian intention, in the sense of Galatians v. 6: "faith working through love."

Thus the orthodox Christian battles for the good against sin, for his own perfection and holiness against evil. But in the first line he fights against the sin within himself, within his own soul. The true battlefield in which the conflict is fought out between good and evil, between sin and virtue, is not the world, but the human heart. Hence we observe in orthodox Christians, especially the Russians, that while they commit sin, many sins and great sins, still they bear in their hearts a deep and vital sense of sin and guilt, and a childlike trust in the mercy of God. In spite of this, orthodox Christianity is not to be considered a "pantheistic, optimistic, simplification of the universe," and it is not correct to speak of a "mystic of feeling" as its sum and substance. On the contrary: the spirit of the orthodox Christian,

so often severely ascetic, radically sacrificial, shows clearly that his Christianity demands of him hard, severe, continuous work, a bitter conflict against the sins in his soul, against poverty, against death: a wrestling for the Grace of God. Solovieff and Dostoyevsky have given the most powerful manifestations of this inner dynamic and the forceful character of orthodox piety, basically pneumatic and mystical.

The two chief forces or chief virtues on which these attitudes of the soul and this difficult labour are based, are humility and love. These two are sovereign in the religious-ethical inner life; they are the compass of the soul for its activity. They may be considered as *the* virtues of orthodox Christianity.

Humility is spiritual insight into the emptiness of one's own ego, into one's sinfulness and poverty, and at the same time a recognition of the limitless sublimity of God and his boundless mercy toward sinful men. "I must become small, descend to the depths of humility; but God must rise up in me, God must become great"; in these words the essence of orthodox Christianity expresses itself from the time of the early Church Fathers up to the present. This is the inner cry of the humble orthodox soul. As Berdiaeff says, "The ontological significance of humility consists in this, that it represents a victory over self-satisfied human personality, over the sinful inclination of man to consider himself the central point of life, in

the overcoming of pride." Can we conceive Christ, His Mother or the various Marys of the Gospels, or any of the saints, without the deepest humility? How could unity and love within the Church, however could the unity of the Christian churches be possible, without humility? Or what is Divine truth, what are all the mysteries of Divine service without the humility of the faithful heart? Not the deed is noble, be it ever so great, but the humility with which this deed was wrought. One of the most powerful words which Dostoyevsky cries to the modern man is : "Humble thyself, thou man of pride."

For the orthodox Christian humility does not mean external obedience or submission ; in no case does it mean subjection of the spirit. Humility is an act of freedom, and implies freedom as a precondition. Free humility before God is the open way to God. For this reason the humility of the orthodox Christian is not only a force in his personal piety, but also a power quite inestimable ; after love, the second creative power of orthodox Christianity. Humility is one of the basic qualities of orthodox Russians, from the simplest peasant to the hero of spiritual life.

The other force is love. From what has been said above, we know that the Church is a unity of love and that the Orthodox cult is penetrated through and through by love. And humility is love. In the orthodox conception,

love is not merely a moral commandment or an ethical will, but a religious-mystical reality. It is not a human quality or achievement, but a grace and a gift of God which works miracles : it embraces everything, it penetrates everything. It is typical of orthodox Christians that they have an extraordinarily strong feeling of the cosmic value of love, that they have sympathy and tender love for men and animals, and feel an inward connection with the whole of Nature. A favourite figure from the works of Dostoyevsky is that of the venerable old man, the "Starets" Zosima, in *The Brothers Karamazov*, whose mouth Dostoyevsky uses to give expression to his own conception of orthodox Christianity. Zosima says : "Love men even in their sins, for that is a symbol of Divine love, and the highest love on earth."

"Love the whole of God's creation, the universe and the tiniest grain of sand. Love every leaf—every one of God's sunbeams."

"Love the animals—the plants—love everything—when you love everything you will understand the Divine secrets hidden in them."

"Love to throw yourself down upon the earth and kiss it—kiss the earth and love it constantly, insatiably ; love everything, love everything, seek such rapture, such exuberance. Wet the earth with your tears of joy, and love these your tears—and do not be ashamed of such ecstasy, for it is a gift of God. A great gift."

These two forces in the ethical piety of

orthodox Christianity are not abstract principles, but creative, reformatory energies of the believing heart. In the following paragraphs I present some important characteristics of the religious-ecclesiastical and ethical mentality of the broad masses of Orthodoxy, especially the Russians, all of them really only radiations of the two main virtues just outlined :—

The orthodox Christian has a deep sympathy for other men, above all for sinful, fallen men. Looking at his sinful fellow, he sees not only the face of a brother man, but the image of God, and therefore he experiences himself in the other man as a creature of God. Here humility and love for God and men go hand in hand.

This sympathy is almost always bound up with the sense of share in the other's guilt, with the feeling that all of us, every one of us, is guilty of the sin or error or crime of the other. It is this mood which leads the religious Russians to the sense of salvation in a body, *together with* their brethren: all must be saved together, or else all perish together. Dante's *Inferno* could never have been produced by a Russian.

With this sense of sympathy and the feeling of joint guilt, there is combined the feeling of deep respect before others. Even in the church during the service the priest and the people bow, first thrice before God, and then again toward each other, asking pardon.

Sympathy, a sense of common responsibility, and deepest respect for others: these three form the basis for the sense of inner communion, the brotherhood of all men as equal creatures of God, as equal sons of the Heavenly Father. In eastern Slavic languages the words for "the other fellow" and "friend" are practically the same. The same thing is true of the words for "family" and "communion."

The well-known Serbian Bishop, Nicolai Velemirovich, once wrote, making a play on the two German words "Slaven" (Slavs) and "Sklaven" (slaves): "With us Slavs, us slaves, Christianity has found a special expression, an especial exposition: universal human brotherhood. We know what it means to be slaves, and so we wish that there should be no more slaves in the world. We know that proud lordship over other men defiles a man and estranges him from God. We have not so much culture, but we have soul, much more soul; just as the Christians in the catacombs had more soul than the emperor on the Palatine."

I believe that the prayers and devotions for the dead, so frequent, so warm and deep, can best and most correctly be understood in view of this attitude of Christianity.

Thus, together with western students of modern times, we may affirm that "in Russia there is a special aversion for pharisaical superiority over those despised by society. The

criminal is here considered as the unfortunate. The humility of western Christians is usually humility before God ; that of eastern Christians is at the same time humility before all men, even the otherwise despised. Great sympathy is the most significant expression of eastern piety."

This love-humility, conceived as a religious-mystic reality, as a grace of God, is conceived by the prophetic souls in the orthodox East as something which is also the creative and reformatory world-energy or the real being of God. From it and only through it and, finally, only for it, will the final salvation come, the final transfiguration of the world, of all mankind : not through formalism, not through external discipline, not by force.

When the basic principles of the orthodox soul are thus postulated, the categorical assertion that Orthodoxy has lost its understanding of moral life, or that it is only theory without activity, must be recognized as untrue to the facts. From my own immediate observation and comparison I must say that the moral life of the broad orthodox masses is generally healthy and of no small stability, and that serious crimes rarely occur. But not only the wholesomeness of their moral life, but also their religious spiritualization has been proved many a time by the self-denial of orthodox Christians in the fire-test of martyrdom. The Russian Archbishop Eulogius of Volynia (now Metro-

politan), made the significant remark at the first Conference for the unity of the churches in Geneva in 1920: "Western Christians understand how to live—eastern Christians, to die." Dostoyevsky chose as a motto for his novel *The Brothers Karamazov*, in which he attempts to give a picture of the soul of Russia, the words from the Gospel of John: "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." Thus the Orthodox have understood, and understand in our present day—how to die. Let us think only of what has happened, is still happening, with religion and the Church in Russia since the Revolution. Dr Siegmund-Schultze, quoting the words of Metropolitan Eulogius just mentioned, adds: "They die in the power of the resurrection." Perhaps! We do not know. But we trust in the Grace of God. What I wish to say here, is only that we Orthodox do not live as though death were the end of everything; that we know we have to learn spiritual dying before our natural death, that the word about the grain of wheat may fulfil itself in us.

Just here I wish to indicate two deficiencies in the activity of the Church: first, insufficiently developed pastoral work; and second, the small extent of foreign missions. Both these are due to the extremely oppressive external circumstances under which the Orthodox Church has lived, almost up to the present day. In recent

decades, however, much progress has been made in both these fields. The Russian Church, for example, developed missionary activity in three main directions: (1) For the maintenance of dispersed orthodox Christians (chiefly in North America and Western Europe), or for the smaller Orthodox Churches, especially under the Patriarchates of Jerusalem and Antioch, where many schools, churches, and philanthropic institutions were founded, and great material help was given to the orthodox Arabian population. (2) For the reconversion of many Russian sectarians and the conversion of other faiths (heathen and Mohammedan) within the Russian Empire. (3) For the conversion of heathen outside Russia. Until the Revolution the Russian Church maintained such missions in Japan, Korea, China, Manchuria, and Persia.

5

The Roman Catholic Church commands a large and disciplined army for the "conquest" of, and "lordship" over the world, the army of the orders and congregations. The Orthodox Church has never had such an army. Its monasticism, which often wins the thorough approval of even western scholars who are otherwise sharply critical, represents only one of the methods and ways of attaining Christian perfection. Neither theoretically nor practically does it form a part of the essential founda-

tion of the Church. The way of monasticism does not mean simply asceticism. Christian asceticism may be, and often is, exercised quite freely and perfectly in the world, without the Christian becoming a monk. Monasticism rather implies that a man should forsake the world and flee from it. Originally it meant that he fled from the Church as well: although not of the world, the Church is in the world and for the sake of it. Monasticism means that the monk, by means of an inward separation from this world's goods, from property, from family, from assured sustenance, etc., wishes to attain the Christian's life-goal, perfection and union with God, through constant contemplative prayer and through inward self-surrender.

It is evident that, from the very nature of its being, orthodox monasticism can never be such an active army as that formed by the Roman Catholic orders. Orthodox monasticism, especially in the earlier periods of its history, has rendered great and manifold services to Church and people both. The monks were usually on the side of the simple people; all through Christian history they have stood bravely, even fanatically, for the Christian truth and the independence of the Church; they have done much to maintain the piety of the people, since for long periods they were the confessors of the common people. But they have achieved much for theological literature and for foreign missions as well; from the monastic orders have

come many of the most famous Church Fathers. Still all of these achievements and services, if we observe Orthodox Church life as a whole and in its essence, will be seen to be only indirect products of its monastic life.

In this connection it is more important to note the fact that for many years, especially in the south-eastern sections of the orthodox world, monasticism has been on the decline, even in that famous monastic centre, the republic of Mount Athos. Besides this, monasticism in Russia, always on a very high level, has been quite shattered by the Revolution.

It is thus evident that Orthodoxy does not strive for the spiritual penetration and reformation of the world by means of armies of monastic orders. Monasticism in the Orthodox Church is intended to help the Church in the fulfilment of its world task, but only indirectly. The Orthodox Church's activity in the transfiguration of the world is not a monastic activity. For this reason the Orthodox Church is not a monastic Church, and its Christianity is not a monastic Christianity. This is why it has kept so fresh the joyous attitude of its faith, like the joy in the Resurrection which filled the early Church.

6

After having thus considered the general relationship of orthodox Christianity to the

world, we may now discuss its principal attitudes toward the State, toward the Nation, and toward Culture. In the West it has become quite usual, in considering these problems, to proceed from certain historical periods or important historical facts or events, and from these to generalize on the relations between Church and State. Thus in the West a general opinion has grown up somewhat as follows: the Orthodox Church means the Byzantine Church; in the orthodox East the State means a sort of Byzantine State; the relationship between Church and State in the East is one of "Byzantinism"; and Byzantinism means *cæsaropapism*, in other words a relationship in which the Emperor as the head of the State is the Pope of the Church. But the whole problem is not at all so simple; on the contrary it is so very complex that no such smooth formula will solve it. For our purpose it is not at all important to investigate the historical course of relationships between Church and State. What should be emphasized here is this: that through all past history the relationship of the Orthodox Church to the State has been in reality one of inward independence and constant effort for the spiritual and ethical penetration of the State. It must also be noted that the Church has always endeavoured, in external affairs of this world, to go forward in unity with, or as our technical expression has it, "symphonically" with the State. Of course in this process it is

evident that there have been frequent vacillations, misunderstanding, tensions, and conflicts. They only witness to the difficulty of the problem of mutual relationships between Church and State. Such difficulties and conflicts as are to be observed in the history of the orthodox East do not alter in the least the general direction of Church-State relationships. The West also has lived through times in which the State had an oppressive preponderance over the Church, for example in the early Middle Ages in the Frankish State, or later, almost in modern times, with the State government of the churches of the German and English Reformation. From the Church history of the West, periods may easily be selected, and not such short periods as that, which, in many respects, evidenced a stronger State power than the so-called Byzantine *cæsaropapism*. The Roman Catholic Church as well, in spite of its theoretically maintained freedom, has only recently been compelled to accept the veto of a secular power in the election of a pope, and even to-day it suffers many intrusions of the State into its government. But these and other similar phenomena offer no justification for a general assertion that the fundamental relationship of the Church and State in the West is that of *cæsaropapism*. So it is in the orthodox East. Nevertheless, certain differences must not pass without notice, must even be emphasized: in contrast to certain parts of western

Christianity the Orthodox Church never carried on a battle for the "conquest" or the command of the State; it has never been a State and never possessed a State; on the other hand, whenever and wherever it was necessary, often under untold torture, with all the humility and strength at its disposal, it has maintained its essential being and its inner freedom against the power of the State. Let me remind you only of the first three centuries, of the iconoclasts, and of the Russian Revolution in our own times. The Orthodox Church can never have striven to conquer the State or to control it from without, since on the basis of the Scriptures and its interpretation of them, it has always recognized the State as such. It can never have attempted external control of the State, since its method of world transfiguration is pneumatic and proceeds from within.

Up to the World War the actual relationship between Church and State and the Church's attitude toward the State was quite different in the different orthodox countries. The four eastern Patriarchates, which for centuries had had to live under the Mohammedan authority of the Turkish Empire, had much to suffer at the hands of this State. Yet, even under these difficult circumstances, the Church was able to maintain comparatively large independence in the management of its own affairs.

In Russia the State had a much stronger influence upon the government of the Church.

For example, the Russian Tsar, through his representative in the supreme organ of the Church, the "Oberprocuror" of the Holy Synod, had unusual influence. Of course it was "a vulgar error" to think of the Russian Tsar as head of the Russian Orthodox Church, although many serious investigators of the West have held this opinion. It is true that in matters of Church government the word of the Tsar was very powerful. In the special Russian literature on the subject it is almost unanimously agreed that Peter the Great, who, with the consent of the bishops, introduced this reform (the Holy Synod), was strongly influenced by the western system, and used the royal church charter (*Landesherrliche Kirchenregiment*) as a model. But long before the war a general tendency had made itself evident in the Russian Church toward the diminution of the State's influence in Church government. The great preconciliar Commission of 1905 adopted resolutions to this effect. But then came the years of war and revolution which brought a complete alteration of the whole situation.

The development of relationships between Church and State in Greece and Rumania was not greatly influenced by the situation in Russia. In Serbia this influence was still less, and the Bulgarian Church kept itself completely free from State influence. In Bulgaria the Church has always been a free Church.

The mutually stronger connection and in-

fluence of State and Church in the East is also to be explained by the fact that all of the States of the orthodox peoples have been orthodox-national States, and that in earlier times the omnipotence of the State authority was a universally recognized principle. The World War brought great changes in this sphere, first of all in the Russian Church. Here the separation of Church from State was carried out radically and even in an atheistic sense. By this act all former relationships of the Church to the State were completely altered, and many things were put out of the way which formerly had hindered the Church's free development and its creative powers. The long-continued process of the Russian Revolution and the method it has employed for dissolving the relationship between Church and State has given the Russian Church much valuable experience. It has been able to convince itself that it is now free to develop its activity in the new State. Already many Russians believe that one of the greatest advantages the Revolution brought to the Orthodox Church is the Church's freedom from the State, a freedom which, once achieved, will never be given up.

By its new constitution, approved by the State in 1925, the Rumanian Church won emancipation from undesirable interference of the civil power in Church affairs. In Serbia, developments are moving in the same direction. In Bulgaria, as has already been noted, the

Church has been a free Church since the foundation of the new Bulgarian State (1879). It must be noted, however, that, except for Russia, this emancipation of the Church from the State, chiefly urged by the churches but also by the States themselves, must not be understood to mean enmity or even indifference toward the State.

The political emancipation of the orthodox peoples created a new situation for the Church to work in. The newly-created States took over the task of managing the civil affairs of the nation, which up to this time had been carried on by the Church under the foreign domination of Mohammedan Turks or Catholic Austrians. This altered situation made it possible at last for the orthodox churches to concentrate upon their own proper sphere, the fulfilment of their own Christian mission: the spiritual care, the "cure of souls" of the faithful. This brings us to the question of the attitude of the Orthodox Church toward nation and culture.

In the literature and science of the West it has become almost usual to consider the orthodox churches as nationally limited, as so limited, indeed, that Church and nation can exist "only" in connection with each other, and that the Orthodox therefore find it very difficult to rise to the idea of the international catholicity of the Church. Thus the cultural work of the orthodox churches is one only for the benefit of these national States. How much of this idea is

correct? What is the attitude of orthodox Christianity toward nation and culture? For us Orthodox it is self-evident that the Church should recognize the nation as a natural unit, just as it recognizes single personalities and the family, without at all denying the general, the whole of humanity, the catholic, or without setting nation and mankind over against each other. Such a conception of contradictory values, as we have seen in other areas, would be contradictory to the very essence of the Orthodox Church. Rather the Church unites these contrasts and brings nation and humanity together as parts of one organism, without at all wishing to dissolve one in the other. Thus the Church does not deny the national element so long as it does not take the egoistic form of exclusiveness or superiority, so long as it does not become chauvinistic. On the other hand, the Church cultivates and supports, even if indirectly, many of the individual qualities and values of a nation, such as its language and the idea of a national State.

This attitude towards the nation arises not only from the Church's fundamental conceptions, but also from its history. For long centuries the one great task of the Orthodox Church was to save the nation and the national idea, and every intensification of orthodox Christianity meant at the same time the strengthening of the nation. The western Christian peoples who were not forced to live under such pressure of

foreign domination and the Catholic Church, which until the Middle Ages held these peoples all together, proceeded to an ecclesiastical development, in the course of which almost all the Romance nations became Roman Catholic, almost all the Germanic, and especially the Anglo-Saxons, became Protestant, and of these latter almost all the Germans became Lutherans and the Anglo-Saxons Anglicans or Reformed. Thus it cannot be the task of the Orthodox Church to deny or oppose the national idea; it must oppose nationalistic egoism; it must consider chauvinism its enemy.

And a third point: with the exception of the ancient Greeks, all the other peoples of the orthodox world were won for Orthodoxy directly from barbarism; their higher spiritual and cultural life began with the work of the Orthodox Church among them. From that time on, the peoples lived in their churches. The Church was their spiritual mother. This explains the close, inward, spiritual bond between nation and Church among orthodox peoples, a bond similar to that of individual persons with Christ or His Church. But this does not at all mean that the Church should somehow be absorbed in the nation. This has never been the case in the Orthodox Churches. Like good soil, the nation receives spiritual seed from the Church. Guarded and nourished by the Church, the seed grows and produces blossoms. The nation becomes indeed a bearer of orthodox Christianity,

but not its prison. On the other hand, the Church fertilizes nation and culture; it is the nation's inner soul and its conscience. Just this, in our opinion, is one of the important purposes of the Church. Only thus can the Church fulfil its direct mission in the world: to lead individuals, nations, the whole of humanity, to the Kingdom of God, to God Himself. Only thus can the Church be indirectly creative in the Christian transfiguration of all things, secular and spiritual, and thus forward the cultural work of men and of all mankind.

This cultural effort can only be one for religious-ethical renewal. This phrase gives both the means and the manner of the cultural effect of the Orthodox Church. It is quite false to maintain that orthodox Christianity has not been culturally creative in the past, or that it is not so to-day. Everything of cultural worth which the orthodox people possess is the fruit of the inward forces and efforts of the Orthodox Church. This statement about the significance of the Church for national culture is far more true for the Christians in the East than for the Christian West, because in the East cultural effort has always been intimately associated with the Christianization of the eastern peoples. It is not true, as has been often alleged, that the Church in the West differs from the Eastern Church in that it has always been culturally creative, while the Church in the East has not. The difference lies rather

in the different ways and the different qualities of the cultural-creative effort of the churches in the East and in the West. In the West the attempt has often been made to Christianize the world and its culture from without, by means of domination or control; in the East the Church has chosen the way of transfiguration from within. In the West this has often led to contradictions, when cultural life made itself independent and emancipated itself from the Church and Christianity. This is why in the West we often find the Church and Christianity on one side, and "the world" and "culture" on the opposite. Such a sharp contrast is not to be found in the eastern churches; it would belie their whole character. If ever there should be a contradistinction here, it could be only an "either" "or" question for us: either Christ or Antichrist. Here there can be no compromise in the purpose or the content or the method of the Church's cultural effort. Purpose, content, and method must all be orientated toward this "either" "or."

Dostoyevsky, in his famous *Legend of the Grand Inquisitor* from *The Brothers Karamazov*, has given the most pertinent and most moving expression to this attitude of orthodox Christianity. I will state this in a few words only; for the right conception of our question you should certainly read the whole legend. Dostoyevsky pictures how, in Seville at the time of the Inquisition, on a day when new

masses of heretics have been fed to the flames "to the glory of God and of Christ," suddenly Christ Himself, alone, beaming with Divine love and grace, appears in the streets; how all are first greatly moved, and then fall into a complete and stupid quiet. Only the Grand Inquisitor himself refuses to be touched: he places himself before Christ and leads Him to his house. Here in the house from which the threads of conquest and domination go out over all the world, the Grand Inquisitor makes a long speech of complaint against the silent Christ: at the time of the temptation in the wilderness Christ made the wrong choices, and indicated ways to the Kingdom of God which are impossible for Christians to follow. The Roman Church must win the nations for Christ, but it cannot do this in the ways which Christ Himself indicated and expects it to pursue. The Roman Catholic Church must here correct Christ, because it believes only thus can it best serve His work and Himself. It sees, better than Christ could, that the peoples of the world, the simple folk, live first of all by bread, that they wish to be led by the glory of miracles and the charm of spectacles, that they desire to be dominated by worldly power. Therefore the Church has first to give the people what they want: bread, miracles, power; then the people will go like a complacent herd where the Church wishes to lead them, to Christ, to God.

What Dostoyevsky wishes to show here is that in its work of cultural development and of saving souls, other things have primary importance for the Roman Church than the free resolution of the humble human soul thirsting after the mercy of God, or the inward reformation and training of the Christian.

Orthodox Christianity, as Dostoyevsky indicates at the close of his story, emphatically denies such an attitude and holds fast to the word of Christ: "Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you" (Matt. vi. 33).

CHAPTER VI

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

"Let us love one another, that with one accord we may confess. . . ."—

From the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom.

MANY theologians, in comparing the three great groups of Christendom, say that if they were to express in one word the essence of each, they would use the following : The Roman Church is the Church of Peter, the Evangelical that of Paul, and the Orthodox that of John. We Orthodox can scarcely agree to this characterization, since we too feel strongly Pauline, placing grace and faith in the first place, allied, of course, with freedom and love, and since we also represent the strongly pneumatic church and the mystical Christianity of the Apostle Paul. But we feel ourselves Petrine also, since we also give proper respect and emphasis to human effort and human authority without wishing to lapse into either worldliness or self-righteousness in good works.

One thing must never be forgotten, that Peter, Paul, and John were all three disciples and apostles of Christ; that all three had Christ as their Saviour, and all three served

Him truly. But the faithful of the three great historical sections of Christendom also belong to the one Christ, their Saviour and Lord. This community in belonging to Christ is something immeasurably wide and deep in spite of all exterior divisions, in spite of human weakness and sin. It is a marvellous, boundless gift of the Grace of God in Christ Jesus.

We have communion in faith: one triune God; one Christ, the Logos become man, the God-man Christ; one redemption through Jesus, our Saviour; one grace of the Holy Spirit—in Baptism and in the Communion; one Word of God—in the Holy Scriptures; finally, one love. Are not these the fundamentals, the pillars and the joint foundation of our Christian religion, but by the same token, also of our Christian churches? True, in our sins we have torn the garment of Christ. But could we thus really have divided His Body?

The Christian churches evidence many great differences. We must therefore distinguish between them, but we dare not separate them in Christ, for in Christ they *are* not separated. With all their differences they are not only allied in their general foundations and basic truths, but they touch each other at many other points.

Here I should like to indicate briefly the similarity and relationships, as well as the differences, of the Orthodox Church as compared to the other great sections of Christendom.

The Orthodox Church is so closely related

to the Roman Catholic, that one might almost think they were the same, except for the idea of the papacy: almost the same faith; the same sacraments; the same hierarchy; tradition in one as in the other; Works and the Law in both of them. Nevertheless, there are many and important differences, as we already know: in the teaching of justification; in the working out of the hierarchical principle; in the interpretation and use of tradition; in the detailed conception and application of Work and Law; in views on the relationship of the human and Divine, of earth and Heaven; and in many other things. The chief point on which the two churches necessarily divide is the relationship between Christ and the Pope.

But is there also a kinship between the Orthodox Church and Protestantism? Or are these two Christian groups completely different from each other? Protestantism and Orthodoxy are not widely separated from each other in the common bases of Christianity already indicated above.¹

In many points the Orthodox Church is even nearer Protestantism than to Roman Catholicism. For instance, some of the following: (For the purposes of comparison, on account of the great variety of the Protestant churches, I shall limit myself to the Lutheran and Anglican churches.)

Considered from the formal side alone, Protestantism and Orthodoxy are nearer in

¹ See note, p. 37.

the matter of the Holy Scriptures, since these are much more widely used and considered of greater importance in the Orthodox than in the Roman Church. Further, the chief dogmatic principles of the Orthodox Church as expressed in the Nicæan-Constantinopolitan Creed and in the Christological decisions of the first œcumenical councils, are all accepted by the greatest Protestant churches. Probably the most significant likeness is the immediate and central position held by Christ in the piety of both Orthodox and Protestants. The whole doctrine and the whole life of the Orthodox Church is completely Christocentric. Lutheran Protestants and Orthodox are also near each other in their emphasis on the inner personal position in the doctrine of justification as against the objective and formal one, as conceived by the Roman Church: "*Meritum*," etc. The same is true in the question of grace and freedom, where both Lutheran and Orthodox emphasize the primary importance of grace. And both groups are especially near in their common renunciation of the doctrine of works as merit earned and the doctrines associated with it, indulgences and purgatory. It is true that here the orthodox churches do not go so far as complete denial of the significance of human free will and human works. Both Orthodoxy and Protestantism deny the idea of the papacy, and hence arrive together at the position of self-government for the whole church.

Protestant and Orthodox are nearer each other in the doctrine of the sacraments, since both emphasize the inner and personal position in contrast to the Roman Catholic conception of the mechanical effect of the sacraments. It is true that here the Orthodox Church does not go so far as to see in the sacraments mere "symbols" of our communion with God.

It is further to be noted that the Orthodox Church does not over-emphasize the significance of the cult of the saints or the "Works" of the saints. Again, in their conception of the essence and the meaning of the law or of the church ordinances, Orthodoxy and Protestantism are nearer, since in contrast to the Roman Catholic Church they ascribe only conditional authority to laws and regulations.

In general we Orthodox have the impression that while Orthodoxy holds a viewpoint expressed as a double-unity of the Divine and human, the Protestant churches emphasize more largely "Divine," while the Roman Catholic Church emphasizes the "human" part of the double adjective: "divine-human." Protestantism lays stress on the ideal, and Catholicism on the real and practical. Secondly, we have the impression that in Protestantism the subjective and personal is one-sidedly emphasized, and in the Catholic Church the collective-absolute (which culminates in the person of the Pope), while we Orthodox maintain the conception of community and unity

in Christ and in love. And thirdly, we think we see that in many cases Protestants go too far in their zeal against the distortion of Christian truth by papal Rome, and push their negation of these distortions so far that they follow a policy of simple protest and mere negation.

The differences between Orthodoxy and Protestantism which might be mentioned are certainly not few and not unimportant. Many of them, of course, merely reflect the richness and the variety of life in Christendom, but not a few of them are painful evidences that we have torn the garment of Christ. The Orthodox Church is convinced that it has remained faithful to the ancient and undivided church of Christ, but still it is moved to deep sorrow at the division and separation of the churches, and many of its best sons will always be ready to give their full powers for the holy work of restoring the necessary unity. Our Church prays fervently in every liturgy "for the peace of the whole world; for the welfare of God's holy churches, and the union of them all." It knows that divisions exist in Christendom, and hence every liturgy contains the prayer that "the divisions may cease."

This is to be seen in practice as well as theory. The Orthodox Church has repeatedly discussed the question of unity with the Roman Catholic Church, and stated its own position. The Roman Catholic Church, in our opinion,

is responsible for "the development," *i.e.*, alteration, of the doctrine of the old and undivided church, and has since then frequently decided upon new alterations in doctrine, acting on its own complete authority, against the basic principle of community in love, and without asking the opinion of its eastern sister. By the unity of the Church, or the union of the churches, Rome understands the complete subjection of the Orthodox, to the present Roman Church. For centuries the Roman Church has used all possible means to win the orthodox churches, or at least some of them, into this form of so-called "union."

This is especially true in our day. Roman Catholic propaganda is pushed with special zeal in the orthodox East by the various "Congregations," Franciscans, Capuchins, Jesuits, Assumptionists, Passionists, and others. Every means and every opportunity are made use of for this purpose: schools, philanthropic institutions, the political support of Catholic powers in the West (chiefly France and Italy), and political difficulties in the countries concerned. A widespread propaganda in books and newspapers serves the same purpose, as do special organizations and institutes such as the "Sacra Congregatio pro Ecclesia Orientali," founded in 1917 and the "Oriental Institute" in Rome, which gives out the serial publication *Orientalia Christiana*. The leader of this institute, Mgr.

Michel d'Herbigny, publishes a series of "Union" documents. The Roman Church is developing a lively propaganda among the Russians, especially among the *émigrés*.

I am convinced that all these attempts are wasted effort, and that as long as the dogmas of the primacy and infallibility of the Pope stand, no unity is to be thought of, since this dogma contradicts the essence of the Orthodox Church. But even here we do not lose hope. We do not know what God has in store for us in the future. Peter denied His Lord, but still he repented, and the Saviour loved him. Who knows but that Christian Rome may not some day follow Peter in this.

Up until recently the Orthodox Church had almost no direct touch with the Protestant churches. The propaganda carried on in the last century among orthodox eastern Christians, by North American missionaries who almost denied the Christianity in Orthodoxy, had no other results than to exhibit Protestantism to Orthodoxy in a very bad light. But on the other hand, Protestantism and its life has been brought nearer to Orthodoxy through Protestant, and particularly German Protestant, theological science, and hence much of Protestantism has been received with sympathy and respect, and is highly valued in the East. This attitude has been strengthened and deepened in recent years since Orthodoxy and Protestantism have come into direct contact

in the œcumenical Conferences. Among Protestant churches those nearest to Orthodoxy are the Lutheran, especially the north European Lutheran, and even nearer, the Anglican Church. The latter emphasizes the episcopal, the catholic, and the cult-element more strongly than do the others. This is, of course, the reason that the Orthodox and the Anglican churches had come, long before the war, into closer contact and even to an exchange of views. It explains the arrangement between the Anglican Church and the Patriarchate of Constantinople in the so-called "*Sakraments-gemeinschaft*." After the war these connections were strengthened even to such an extent that some orthodox churches, led by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, have recognized the validity of Anglican orders (1922). Ever since the formation of the Old Catholic Church the Orthodox have been in close friendly relationships with it as well.

The orthodox churches are also officially and actively participating in all the œcumenical movements for "Friendship through the Churches," for practical Christianity (Life and Work), and not less in that for the union of the churches in "Faith and Order."

What are the mood and the hope of the Orthodox Church which prompt this participation? I believe that I am properly interpreting them when I say that the Orthodox Church has entered into relationships with the other

Christian churches and into these œcumenical movements, because first, it has a broad-hearted conception of the essence of the Church and a deep comprehension of the unity of the Church of Christ ; second, because it has a deep and painful sense both of the tragedy of the separation of the churches and of the difficulty and responsibility of the task of restoring unity ; third, because out of its historical past it feels itself to be a central unit, and as such believes itself called to unifying effort ; fourth, because it has remained true to the old and undivided Christian Church, and truly represents it in the present ; and fifth, because in order to maintain the dogmatic principles of the old Church, it has complete freedom for independent development in everything else, so that to-day after its difficult past history it is able to free itself from all the deficiencies and weaknesses of its members, and to arise to new heights of spiritual effort and self-realization by virtue of the impulse immanent in it. It is therefore the holy duty and the immediate task of the Orthodox Church to offer creative co-operation in the Divine work of the union of the churches and the all-around development of Christianity.

Unity of the churches is not to be understood as uniformity. This is neither possible nor desirable. The Divine life of the Church is so boundlessly rich and so endlessly various, that it is quite impossible even to desire its confinement to the narrowness of uniformity.

Unity is rather unity in substance and in active love, and the realization of such unity is the holy duty of all Christians.

Christianity has still so many important and difficult tasks to fulfil in this world. Two-thirds of mankind are still outside the Christian Church. And how much Christians themselves still lack of inward intensification and training! This task of making the Church truly catholic and truly holy demands the unity of our souls and of our churches.

As a true interpreter of orthodox Christianity, I am deeply grateful to be able to bring a closing message to all the other Christian churches. For all of us, the word of the Apostle Paul should be a holy motto: "Walk . . . with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing *one another* in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. iv. 2, 3).

In our common theological-scientific work, and in the holy co-operation of the churches in which we are engaged, the motto of the ancient teacher should still be valid:

In neccesariis unitas,
In dubiis libertas,
In omnibus autem caritas.

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